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JOHN BULL

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For meaning of this number see page iii. of cover.

The world is a bundle of hay;
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull

—BYRON.

Edited by
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY.

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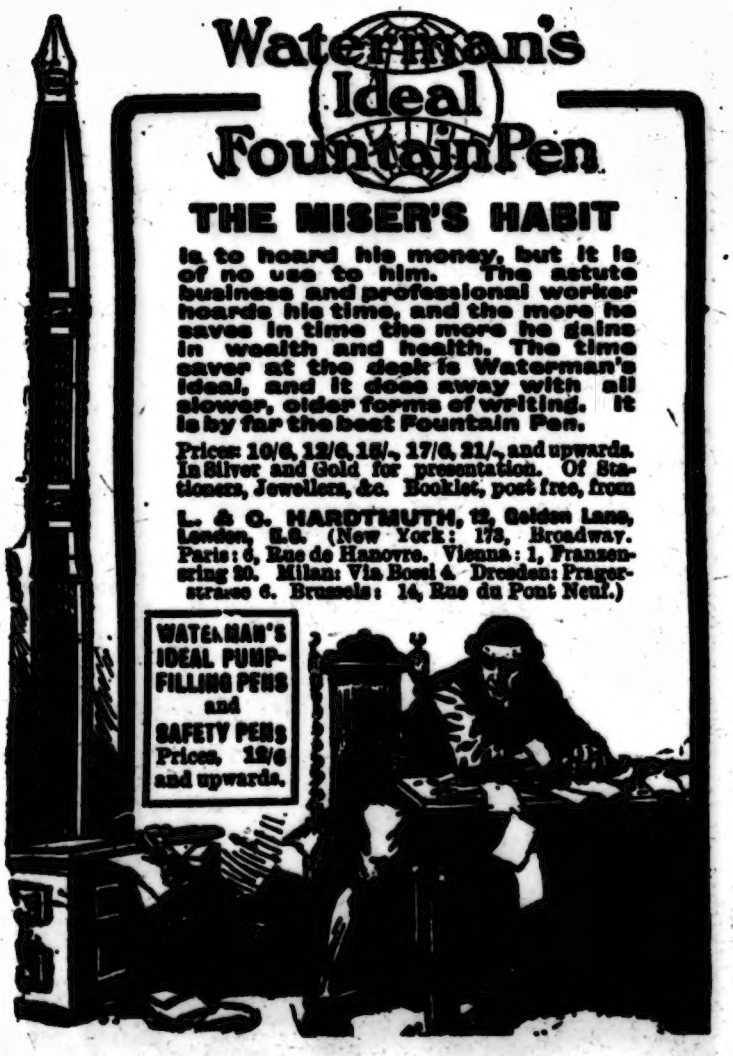

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THE WORLD THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

[*The Editor discourses upon passing events and topics of the day.*]

When asked whether he proposed to take the verdict of his constituents, our Editor recently replied that he could give no definite answer until certain civil echoes of the recent Guildhall war-whoop had died out—which explains the little crop of actions which he is now engaged in fighting. We have no desire to inflict any further personal matters upon our readers, but in the above connection we think it fair to them to quote the following sentence from our Editor's speech to the jury in *Murray v. Bottomley*:—

> This is one of a series of actions launched against me under circumstances which led to the confident expectation that I should either settle them or appear in Court to fight them under the ban of a committal for trial on a criminal charge. But, gentlemen, the plans of the plaintiffs have gone wrong, owing to the collapse of the Guildhall proceedings, and I am determined that henceforth I will not submit to any further exactions at the hands of disappointed speculators.

Last week we asked for Croydon's verdict on the Naval crisis. The House of Commons' decision, under our Party system of government, does not count. Everybody knew what the exact figures would be before the debate began, but the verdict given by a constituency which in itself is a great town, and noted for its enterprise and activity, is another thing altogether. The result of the election, an increased Tory majority of 3,370, is the notice to the Government to quit office—and it cannot be ignored.

Questioned in the House of Commons the other day as to the cost of the Bottomley prosecution, Mr. Hobhouse, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, put the figure at £2,500. Of course, the official who prepared the answer had left out an "o"—but that is nothing.

Who is the Foreign Ambassador who recently wrote to His Majesty complaining that, when dining with a certain Cabinet Minister, he was deputed to "take in" a famous lady dancer?

The end of the Paris postal strike is almost more amazing than that it should ever have been allowed to take place. The commerce and comfort of Europe were upset for many days, millions of money were recklessly sacrificed, thousands of people suffered hideous inconvenience. Yet the strikers are calmly allowed to come back like conquerors in a triumphant procession, without any sort of guarantee as to their future behaviour. Now they know their strength, and, if their tyrannical demands are ever ignored, they will be even more prompt and adroit in dislocating the public service another time. The French Government and Parliament have been flouted and rendered ridiculous. Like Ham the accursed, the servant of their servants shall they be. It is certainly appropriate that Fallières rhymes with derrière. He may now resign himself to the occupation of a back-seat.

It is strange that the Karageorgevitch family cannot refrain from murder; stranger still that, in a land dominated by regicides, anyone should be found to object to a Crown Prince's pleasure in killing his valet. The secret, of course, is that the Servian regicides are divided amongst themselves. Some still adhere to their puppet Peter, but others have been playing mad George off against them. The scandal of the valet's murder has accordingly been welcomed as a pretext for snuffing out the firebrand. The elder regicides, moreover, objected to George's bellicose proceedings. No one was ever so brave as they when it came to hacking a defenceless woman to pieces, but they do not precisely yearn for the smell of powder in the field. Meanwhile, George is not to be brought to trial for his crime. He is to do penance by travelling abroad. We suggest that the rest of his family should hasten to follow his excellent example.

Congratulations to Lieutenant Shackleton on his success in reaching the Magnetic Pole and beating the record of Southern exploration. We admire his pluck and endurance, which are worthy of the traditions of our country. So far as he is personally concerned, we acquiesce in all the adulation and celebrity which are his guerdon. But we hope he will not think us ungracious if we inquire, like Little Peterkin, what good is expected to come from all his labours and all the expense which have been lavished on the expedition. It is all very fine to discover new continents, but if no one can ever profit by their existence, surely they might as well have been left in their mysterious obscurity. It is, perhaps, pleasing to learn that coal has been discerned among the geological strata of the Antarctic, but we venture to doubt whether a single lump will ever be extracted for the comfort of any human home. We really wish somebody would hurry up and reach both Poles. Then perhaps we should have the end of all the nonsense of Polar exploration.

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

Straws show which way the stream flows. Mr. A. E. W. Mason, the Liberal member for Coventry, who also writes plays and novels, will not seek re-election. Nominally, Mr. Mason proposes to retire because he finds "politics incompatible with literature." Actually, it looks as though he might find a majority reckoned in tens incompatible with safety. Quite a number of famous literary men, some of them as eminent as Mr. Mason nearly, have dabbled in politics without discovering the joint-tax too much for their brains. However, it is only fair to Mr. Mason to say that when he entered the political field he said he would leave it again if he found it interfered with his literary work, and—well, one *must* make some excuse for clearing out.

Apropos the Croydon election, an irate reader accuses us of "putting into the mouths of the enemies of the working-class unscrupulous arguments on behalf of the privileged exploiter." In other words, it seems, one or more of the street corner spouters at Croydon have been quoting our harmless little joke about the absence of Mr. Victor Grayson from the House of Commons being accountable for the loss shown on the kitchen account. The "Hedonistic" Victor, it seems, is being represented as the type of his class: a villainously over-fed Labour Party, battening on the vitals of the poor. We must be more careful in future.

The teetotal fanaticism of Mr. Arthur Henderson, chairman of the Labour Party, and of Saint Philip Snowden have roused at last, as was inevitable, a rare storm in working-class circles throughout the country. The indiscretion of Labour "leaders" whose salaries are paid as to seven-eighths by moderate-drinking working men and women, going about the country as paid flag-waggers to the Whittaker faction of Prohibitionists, has been condoned out of generous feeling for the appreciation of their laborious and painstaking devotion to Parliamentary duty. But Mr. Snowden's denunciation of his trade-union employers at Bradford from a Band of Hope platform as "a drink-sodden democracy" was the last straw. Apart from the fact that by such utterances Mr. Snowden signs his own political death-warrant, and after the next election will have to retire once more into the remote village from which the drink-sodden democracy has raised him to his present lofty position, it is widely felt among the rank and file that unless the stopper is put upon this sort of mad deliverance, the Party will go down at the polls in the all-round reaction that is rapidly shaping itself against the tea-potters. There is no doubt that unless the Labour Party purges its public work of these Puritan excesses before the General Election, the electors will purge the House of Commons of the Labour Party. Which would be a pity.

A Brixton reader sends us the following quaint extract from the "Annual Register" for 1809:—

> *R. v. The Lord of the Manor of Holdernesse.*
>
> This case arose out of the floating ashore of a cask of wine and a dispute as to its ownership. (By the way, the Crown authorities said it had not paid Port dues, and the bailiff said "He thought it was Madeira.")
>
> The Crown lost, and the report concludes:—
>
> "The lord keeps the wine, and will have to pay an enormous bill of costs for the defence of his rights, as in informations by the Attorney-General, though the verdict is with the defendant, he does not get his costs. *John Bull* will (but hold, we have just mentioned the name of Mr. Attorney)—and the counsel who were in the cause say, in their opinion, it was one of the best casks of wine which ever reached the English coast."

The reference to *John Bull* is mysterious, as we have no knowledge of any publication of that name at so early a date, but the words are in italics in the original. And *if* the recent prosecution had anything to do with the Licensing Bill, the coincidence is all the stranger.

One of our Catholic readers, who has been in dire want for some time, found herself at length reluctantly compelled, for the sake of her children, to apply to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for aid, and this is the reply she received. It is addressed from the Cathedral Clergy House, and dated March 17th:—

> The above have considered your request for relief. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul exists to help those who are in difficulties through loss of work for a *short* time, illness, etc. It does not seem that you have any prospect of obtaining regular work, and as you state that your children "are starving," the Society can only suggest your going to the workhouse *for a time at least*, and they would be there fed up. From the workhouse you could come out to look for *work*, and should you really obtain a post, which promised to be permanent, the Society would no doubt then come and see what it could do to give you a proper start again in life. But at present it does not seem likely that you will be able to support yourself or family.
>
> ——————, *Secretary.*

There is no word of courtesy or sympathy at the beginning of the letter or at the end. It simply bears the name of the Secretary—whose signature is so absolutely illegible that we won't attempt to describe it. No wonder the poor woman tells us that such a letter "pierces one to the utmost—more especially when you have been brought up respectably." What say the Westminster Cathedral authorities?

Mr. Churchill is trumping the good cards of his predecessor, Mr. Lloyd George, at the Board of Trade. His Trade Boards Bill is the *magna charta* of the sweated men, and women, and children of our great cities. It is a good Bill. It means that the sweater has had his day, and that he will soon cease to be. There is to be no more illicit traffic in human lives—or what comes to the same thing, no more starvation wages for the workers in tailoring, in cardboard box-making, in machine-made lace and net-finishing, and in blouse making. That for a start and a test. Where sweating is elsewhere proved, it will also be brought within the net. A minimum wage, fixed by Trade Boards, and made compulsory by the law, the right of legal recovery as a civil debt of the difference between the sweating wage and the minimum wage "in the absence of a contract to the contrary," the application of the law to home industry as to factories—these are the salient provisions. The broad criticism we make for the moment is that contracting out will not do. A contract is no contract unless it is free, and there is not, and cannot be, any freedom of contract between a worker whose first need is bread to live, and an employer whose only object is to grind profits out of human bodies. But this and one or two other details can be put right by Parliamentary discussion. We receive this Bill now as a great effort in the practical statesmanship of humanity, and to Mr. Churchill we say "Well done." But at the same time we do not see why the House should have refused leave to Mr. Marks to bring in a similar measure as applied to imported sweated goods. As it is, Mr. Churchill's Bill *may* have the effect of transferring much of the work abroad. We must see what can be done to graft something on to the Bill to meet this danger.

Let's talk of graves! It is very good news, vouched for by no less an authority than the County Court Judge of Barnsley, that the poorer classes of the population are being gradually weaned from the mad folly of spending their substance and the insurance money on riotous funerals. Much of such outlay in the past was no doubt humbug, or perhaps we ought to use the gentler word, convention. The working woman widow who did not spend all she got from the club on hearses and oak and plumes and bad wine and sweet biscuits and black clothes was put down by the neighbours

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as a wicked and heartless female, who had in some degree exploited her old man, and had possibly connived at his premature decease. The same woman would spend pounds on a funeral and would afterwards grudge a few pence to keep the grave in order, which is understandable after all. Old Fitzgerald hated "bone-rummaging," and not everybody loves cemeteries or enjoys paying out in behalf of the half-forgotten and, perhaps, not entirely deserving dead. Human affection and human vanity are queer things.

Anyway, an excess of funeral economy is welcome; even more welcome would be an assurance that the necessities of the poor are no longer villainously traded upon by certain interment companies. We do not hunger and thirst very much after municipal "undertaking," which they have to some extent in France, and are now introducing into Germany; but the conduct of some of the English cemetery companies seems to be almost ghoulish. A small point of injustice to the undertaking and stonemason's trades was brought to our notice lately. A cemetery company put a tax of a guinea on every tombstone bought by bereaved relatives from an outside firm. This is Protection with a vengeance. If we may not live without Tariff Reform, let us at least be saved from its exactions when we die. Supper-table problem: In this case did the producer or the consumer pay the tax?

Things—like ladies—are very seldom what they seem. After the legal squabble as to what is whisky, the Courts are now being troubled with the problem: What are blankets—Witney blankets? One might be inclined to declare that a Witney blanket must be a blanket made at Witney, in Oxfordshire. But such simple definitions raise side-issues touching German sausage, Scotch shortbread, Irish shamrock, and (dare we say it?) British patriotism. Some of the Witney blankets, or so-called Witney blankets, nowadays, it seems, are made in Yorkshire. But a charter was granted to Witney, Oxon, by Queen Anne for the making of blankets. Apparently Queen Anne, by general admission being now dead, her specific limitation may be deemed not to apply. As the question of what is what and which is which is now occupying the noblest legal minds of Manchester and district, we may say very little more upon it. For ourselves, however, we know only two kinds of blankets: the ones we use at home and those we send out to the heathen.

This is the season when the ordinary town gardener begins to fiddle-faddle about with his bit of clay back-yard, to bury seeds therein with an uncertain hope of results, and to stick roots of sorts into ill-prepared holes, in a spirit of moderate optimism. Therefore, it may be useful to print the warning of a correspondent, who suggests that buyers of these things, who are novices, should deal only with reputable firms. Occasional readers of the amateur gardening papers, he says, will see strong recommendations to grow "named sorts" in preference to the usual hawkers' and street-market miscellanies. The advice may be sound, if you are sure of the "name," and are dealt with faithfully by the firm to whom you send your order. This, we gather, is not always the case.

For example, a friend of our correspondent bought recently a number of "named" carnations. They had the prettiest names imaginable, some of them very like the names of the finest possible varieties. There were Queens and Princes and Knights among them, as well as titles suggestive of much coming sweetness and light. Having caught his carnations, so to speak, the buyer proceeded, with the aid of a catalogue, to work out his colour-scheme. But, lo and behold, not one of the names was discoverable in the catalogue! So he betook himself to the library and worried through the lists of "best sorts" in the various sections of the gardening encyclopædias—all to no purpose. "No doubt," he thought, "my little lot consists of all the very latest; they are only stocked by the special firms." Inquiry, however, promptly wiped out such radiant dream. None of these wonderful varieties were known to the authorities. Apparently, the dealer had pulled up the first seedlings that came handy and labelled them with nice names according to his picturesque fancy. There is no law against this, of course; but it displays the "named sorts" bait in a somewhat new aspect.

There is just a possibility that the Germans may be dished after all—by the forces of Nature. It is like this. In Arizona there is a gentleman called Professor Percival Lowell. He may be remembered as the discoverer of the "canals" in Mars. These canals may be in Mars and they may not; in logic Lowell makes out a very good case for them. He also says he can see them plainly. His rival at the Lick Observatory, who has a more powerful telescope, however, says they are not "canals" at all. The point is of interest only to those who worry about what will happen to their descendants unto the fiftieth and sixtieth generations; if Lowell is right, those descendants will be dried up gradually by the sun, just as the Martians are being dried up at present. Recently Professor Lowell printed a second book to prove this; but it has not created quite so many thrills as he had hoped. So now he strolls in with a more immediate and novel scare. It appears that, wandering about the solar system just now is a "tramp star" which bids fair to strike the sun in an awkward spot at an early date. Should it do so, "we shall be turned into nothingness"; that is to say, if before the actual collision we are not "turned into icicles" by the preliminary preparations of star and sun for their 'orrible encounter. Confronted with possibilities of this sort why, after all, worry about the result of the Croydon election?

It is a great pity that many of our Colonists will not take the trouble to realise the fact that there are two sides to what they are pleased to call "Home interference" in matters concerning native administration. The latest instance of the absurd claim of the Colonial to settle the native—by law or with a Maxim—without regard to English opinion comes from Natal. The South African Native Races Committee have published a remarkable book dealing with native policy, and some of the home papers have dared to commend the book, and in doing so have reflected on the Natal Government's lack of foresight. Whereupon the usual "South African Colonist" writes from Pietermaritzburg in denunciation of the home critics, and demands to be let alone. Of course, this is ridiculous. Even were the Colonial politician—by profession—a much wiser man than we know him to be, the Imperial Government could not accept his dictum of non-interference. Who pays for the Army, which will have to go out and shoot the nigger when the Natal blunderers have driven him into revolt by their bogus prosecutions, and their general scare tactics? Who keeps up a Navy to prevent wicked Germany from gobbling up the Garden Colony? Under these circumstances, really we cannot be expected merely to sit down and wait until the native sends in his ultimatum and the Natalian submits the bill of costs.

If we may judge by our own post-bag and what we hear said among working people, there is as little popular enthusiasm behind Mr. Chiozza Money's Compulsory Night School Bill as there was behind the Government's Licensing Bill. There are many objections to it, not least the fact that it seems likely to

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reduce the already limited opportunities for fresh air athletics enjoyed by the youth of our large towns. Of course, education, rational education, suited to the boys and girls to whom it is given, is desirable; but good health is more desirable still. Six hours per week compulsory instruction between the ages of 14 and 17 does not look much, but in the cities, where outdoor exercise is especially needed in growing youth, it might mean almost all the leisure available. A change from an under-educated to a nerve-wrecked, compulsorily crammed younger generation would not be an improvement. What we want is a sensible Code, sufficiently elastic to admit of adaptation to the requirements of all districts and classes.

It would appear that the Council have been unable to find a purchaser for their Thames steamboats, which are now rusting in their place of rest. It is whispered to us that the only reason the Highways Committee do not put them up for auction is their confidential knowledge that the Kaiser has determined in that event to purchase them in order to add them to his invading fleet. His Majesty's notion is that they will be useful in bumping the bump and knocking bits off the bridges.

In his meeting with the members of the Drapers' Chamber of Trade, it cannot be said that the Rev. R. J. Campbell has justified his recent public statement that "in some West End shops the young women are paid such a miserable wage that they are expected and, indeed, encouraged to eke it out by the sale of their bodies." To quote the assertion of "a lady worker," that "of 100 unfortunate women who had passed through her hands the majority had been shop assistants," is no proof at all; it does not necessarily raise even the suspicion of a proof. For a girl who goes wrong to say that her fall was due to selling drapery goods or trimming hats, is as little reasonable as to say that it was due to her being a clergyman's daughter. When the "living in" is taken into consideration, it is doubtful whether the wages paid in West End shops are on a lower scale than the wages paid to girl book-keepers or shorthand typists; and the fact that the shop-girl works longer hours, and has less freedom through the living-in system, certainly tends to operate as a greater bar to immorality among them than among girls with more opportunities of seeking the companionship of men of loose habits. To say that girls in West End shops are expected, and even encouraged, to eke out their wages by selling their honour is, in fact, an outrageous libel on the part of Mr. Campbell. If it is possible for most shop-girls to keep themselves virtuous in given conditions, it is obviously possible for all girls to keep themselves virtuous in the same conditions. Where there are lapses, you have to look less at the conditions than at the girls, and the men they choose for their companions.

We notice from a reply of Mr. Hobhouse to Mr. Howell Davies, that the Government *are* in negotiation for the purchase of the Thorney Estate, and it may be gathered from the Minister's remarks that the sale will go through. We see no objection if the estate is specially suitable for small holdings and can be got at its fair market value. But as we showed a week or two ago, the value of the estate is very difficult to appraise, and there is natural anxiety that the Government shall not be persuaded to pay too much. There was never a Duke of Bedford who did not insist upon his pound of flesh, and we all remember the hauls made by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and the late Lord Hopetoun when they sold land to the late Government. In these circumstances it is reasonable and right that members of the House of Commons should wish to have an assurance from Ministers that the sale will not be concluded before the House of Commons has had an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon the terms of sale. But your Radical Minister is much like his Tory brother where the rights of Parliament are concerned. He over-rides them whenever he thinks it safe to do so, and so we find Mr. Hobhouse gravely telling the House that "it is not possible for a bargain of this kind to be discussed on the floor of the House before it is completed." Why impossible? Why even difficult? Has Mr. Hobhouse ever heard of a provisional contract? There are many transactions that are not valid until they have received the ratification of Parliament. There are treaties, for example, though not so many of them as there ought to be. Why should it be impossible to require the approval of Parliament before spending some three-quarters of a million of the nation's money?

It will have been noticed that the Whisky Commission is still sitting. Mr. F. H. Godsall, wine and brandy taster to the War Office—it must be a nice, light occupation, that—stated to the Committee a few days ago that when wine and brandy were required for the hospitals he was blindfolded, and had to give his judgment on the samples before him without seeing them. One wonders whether new Army schemes and regulations are selected by a similar method. Is the War Minister in office for the time blindfolded, and is he then led to the pigeon holes, bidden to dip his nose in, and draw out whatever scheme or regulation smells the most useful for the time and the occasion?

There is trouble among the Corps of Commissionaires in Manchester. The commander of the district has posted a notice in the Commissionaires' Reading Room, that "any man found smoking in the principal thoroughfares of the town, or in coming to or from this office, or when on duty at any time or place, will be fined as laid down in the rules of the Corps." True, smoking on duty does not look businesslike, especially when a man is in uniform, but why he should have to go down a back street, or hide himself in an empty house or cellar in order to smoke, off duty, is one of those things which must ever remain a mystery.

One of our readers recently asked Dr. Josiah Oldfield, a gentleman who confines his diet to the products of the orchard, to explain why the Lord accepted the meat offering of Abel, and rejected the oblation of Cain. Briefly, Dr. Oldfield answers that the text "shows clearly" that it "does not matter whether we offer a lamb or an apple to God; the important thing is whether we offer it with clean hands and a pure heart." Our own view is that the important thing is whether we eat it with a good appetite and it agrees with our digestion.

Sheriff Sym, of Perth, is also one of the peculiar people. In his Court, one day recently, a man named Duncan Millar was "charged with cruelty to his four children by striking them with a ham knife and a leather strap, cutting and bruising them about the body, and failing to provide them with sufficient food." He therefore bound Duncan over to be of good behaviour; which was a work of wondrous mercy. Subsequently Sheriff Sym had to hear a charge against three men for stealing twelve chairs from a railway shed; wherefore he gave one of them twelve months, and two of them six months a-piece. This is to give notice that the next man charged before him with maliciously jumping on his grandmother will be suitably rewarded.

Who said this was a free country? We are not even respectful to the modern *troglodyte*. Time was when prehistoric man dwelt in caves. There he lived, there he worked, and there he died, leaving behind him his implements, his weapons, and charming

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

exhibits of his bones for the British Museum. That was a time when there were no policemen and no magistrates, and when it was not a crime to sleep out. But much water has passed under the bridges since that day; and at 2 o'clock the other morning, Police-Sergeant Proud and five constables descended on a number of caves about a mile to the south of Seaham Harbour. Finding several men abiding in sleep therein, at peace with all the world in that they paid neither rent nor rates, nor taxes, lulled by the tonic breath of the great sea, dreaming perchance of the breakfast they would enjoy in the morning, the police gathered in the lot and haled them before the Seaham bench. Then Sergeant Proud told a moving story how the men had fitted up the caves with firegrates, and rigged up beds of sorts, and collected abundant food, and supplied themselves with pots and pans wherewith to cook. But the men dwell in those caves no more, having been sentenced each and every one to 14 days' hard for assembling to indulge the simple life. We often wonder what would happen in these days if the Founder of the Christian religion were to come to England and had "nowhere to lay His head"? Perhaps the Seaham magistrates will tell us.

Apparently the good chaplain of the Andover Guardians is in luck. Let us consider. At the last meeting, after the master of the workhouse had announced that he had eight pigs for sale, and the chairman, Colonel Harmer, had mentioned that they had "purchased six more very good ones," and a member had stated he thought the rates would soon go down, the Rev. Delme-Radcliffe, the chaplain, announced that his present cassock was in tatters. "Mr. Page inquired whether the chaplain could not do his work without it; he thought they should let him provide his own clothes," while "Mr. Pearce inquired if the chaplain could not get one for himself; he was well paid." And "after some further remarks the Board decided to purchase one." It seems bounteous philanthropy; and to make things level, and avoid jealousy among the officials, it is hereby suggested that the Board should now carefully consider the claim of the medical officer to a new top hat, and those of the master to a pair of trousers.

WORRIED LOOKS—XXI.

The Cocoa Manufacturer and Slavery which probably might have been discovered earlier.

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING.

"John Bull's" Biscuits.

For the following sentences in a letter: "Ladies can help rifle shooting either by supporting clubs financially, or giving prizes, or by joining rifle clubs, or SHOOTING THEMSELVES. *Many ladies do this. My daughters did it in India,"*

LORD ROBERTS
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating "Cycling parties catered for; good meadow land,"

AN ADVERTISER IN *CYCLING*
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For offering for sale by auction "two cows, good milkers, one recently CARVED,"

AN ADVERTISER IN *THE NOUVELLE CHRONIQUE DE JERSEY*
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that two men were recently imprisoned for "damaging the WIDOW *of the Star Tea Co., Ltd., Cardiff."*

THE SOUTH WALES ECHO
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that "An alarming landslip occurred on Wednesday on the Great Western Railway line at Dunball, but UNfortunately, *beyond a delay in the traffic, no serious consequences ensued,"*

THE SOUTHERN TIMES (WEYMOUTH).
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that "The 8th Battalion Manchester Regiment can now boast of having obtained no fewer than forty-three recruits this year, including FIFTY *during last week."*

THE MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For giving the portraits of two gentlemen "who won the STALLION *and the* FEMALE *Championships at the Hackney Show, 1909,"*

THE FARMER AND STOCKBREEDER
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

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*For inserting under the heading "Too late for Classification" the following advertisement: "*LOST, *Tuesday, 23rd inst., dark brown* EARS, *dropped. Reward on returning to . . . . ."*

THE EVENING NEWS
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that "The interior of the buoy is divided into three WATERTIGHT *compartments, the lower of which is perforated so as to allow free access to the sea water,"*

THE JERSEY TIMES
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that their representative had seen "a hen's egg, the CIRCUMFERENCE *of which measured eight inches and the* DIAMETER *seven and a half inches,"*

THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE TIMES
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating, under the heading "Stonemason's Strange Death" that "he was found DEAD *in a field. . . He was conveyed to the workhouse, where he died,"*

THE LIVERPOOL ECHO
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that "Both the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk are expected back from abroad shortly. The Duchess has been in BOSCOMBE *superintending arrangements,"*

THE BOURNEMOUTH GUARDIAN
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For saying that "had the Irish Party been composed of eighty John Dillons, there would never have been dissension in its ranks,"

MR. THOS. WHITE
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE BOTTOMLEY CASE.—II.

(FROM "BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK.")

(Commenced in issue of March 27th.)

Upon receipt of this letter, I had a long interview with Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons, when he assured me that he had made very strong representations to the Winding-up Department and begged me to let him know should I have any further cause for complaint. As regards the Law Officers, I received the following replies:—

19th October, '06.

Dear Mr. Bottomley,—Should the information you have received be correct, you have, I think, strong ground for complaint. Any statement made by a member of the Official Receiver's staff in reference to matters brought before him and to his knowledge officially would be most irregular, unless made in due course of his duty.

I trust it may turn out that you have not been correctly informed. Should however your impression prove well-founded, the letter which you have written to the Official Receiver himself will no doubt have the effect of stopping in future the practice of which you complain and from which you have suffered.

Yours faithfully,
John L. Walton.

26, Eaton Square, S.W.;
20th October, '06.

Dear Mr. Bottomley,—I have received your letter complaining of the conduct of the officials in the Companies Winding-up Department, but of course I cannot express any opinion on the matters to which you refer. They are under the jurisdiction of the Board of Trade and thus happily beyond the scope either of my authority or knowledge.

Yours faithfully,
W. S. Robson.

Later, came the following letter from the Official Receiver, which I give with my rejoinder thereto:—

Board of Trade.

23rd October, 1906.

Department of the Official Receivers
in Companies Liquidation.
Joint Stock Trust and Finance Corporation, Limited.

Sir,—I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, and to inform you that I have made enquiries regarding your complaint, and am satisfied that no "irresponsible chatter is going on," nor are any reports such as you refer to emanating from this Department.

With reference to your remarks about a Public Examination, you are under a misapprehension in saying that I gave any assurance on the subject.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
H. Brougham.

H. Bottomley, Esq., M.P.

24th October, 1906.

H. de Vaux Brougham, Esq.,
Senior Official Receiver,
Companies Winding-up Department.
Re Joint Stock Trust and Finance Corporation, Ltd.

Sir,—I have your letter and regret that you have been unable to trace the authors of the statements of which I complain.

In regard to the last paragraph of your letter, I was simply referring to what I understood you to say at an early stage of the liquidation. In any case, however, I should personally rather welcome a public examination.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
Horatio Bottomley.

For a time things were quiet, and it appeared that the representations from headquarters were having a beneficial effect upon the conduct of the Department—so much so that when, in the month of November, the Official Receiver was settling the "Observations" which under the Act he is required to circulate amongst the shareholders and creditors, he invited me to go through the draft with him, for the purpose of making any suggested alterations. This I did—finally submitting to him a lengthy memorandum containing suggested amendments and omissions, with explanations relating thereto. I soon discovered, however, that I was being fooled; for, although everything of an unimportant character was readily adopted, suggestions calculated to prejudice me in the eyes of the public were rigorously retained and no reference was ever made to my explanation of the facts. This was bad enough, but I contented myself by issuing counter-Observations, which I was able to circulate by the same post as that which carried the official document—in consequence of having succeeded in securing an advance copy of it. Such was the position at the end of 1906.

"Upsetting Their Plans."

The next link in the chain came in the middle of January, 1907, when I received a letter from the senior partner in a firm of City merchants in the following terms:—

January 15th, 1907.

Dear Sir,—I think it right to inform you of what appears to be a very remarkable state of affairs at present existing in the Official Receiver's Department. I called at his office yesterday in reference to a share certificate, in regard to which there has been correspondence with the Official Receiver. After waiting some time I was referred to a gentleman who, having satisfied himself that I was in no way connected with the company, proceeded to inform me that he was endeavouring to get up a case in regard to what he called the duplication of shares. He stated that owing to some of the Share Registers being missing, it was difficult to trace matters, but that he had found out enough to make a very plausible case, and that provided the Directors were kept in the dark, he could prepare a statement to place before the Treasury which might induce them to take proceedings. He distinctly admitted that no doubt matters might be satisfactorily explained, and when I asked whether it was proposed to give the Directors an opportunity of such explanation before anything further was done, he, to my great surprise, replied, "No, that would entirely upset our plans." I was astounded to hear talk of this kind from a Public Department, and after great consideration decided it was my duty to write you this letter.

Further Correspondence with Mr. Lloyd George.

Upon receipt of this, I saw the writer, and, having thoroughly satisfied myself of the truth of his statements, I determined to take strong measures. I accordingly arranged an appointment and had a long interview with the then Public Prosecutor, Earl Desart, before whom I placed all the facts. I submitted that there was a clear *prima facie* case of conspiracy made out, and urged him to take action in the matter. He listened very attentively to my story, but in the end informed me that he could not prosecute except upon the instructions of the Board of Trade, and suggested that I should place the facts before Mr. Lloyd George. Accordingly, on January 18th, I wrote the following letter:—

The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George, P.C., M.P.,
Board of Trade, Whitehall, S.W.

Dear Mr. Lloyd George,—I am most reluctant to trouble you again in connection with the conduct of the Winding-up Department, but the matter is rapidly assuming the form of a grave scandal. I beg to enclose herewith copy of the Official Receiver's Observations in reference to the affairs of the Joint Stock Trust and Finance Corporation, Ltd., together with copy of a Memorandum by the Directors thereon. Reading these two documents together, you will, I am sure, come to the conclusion that there is much to be explained by the Official Receiver's Department. The matter, however, is emphasised by the subsequent correspondence with the Official Receiver, a copy of which I enclose herewith.

Just imagine the Official Receiver letting it go forth to the world that a body of gentlemen had settled a batch of actions against them based upon charges of misrepresentation and fraud without mentioning the fact that one of the conditions of such settlement was the withdrawal of such charges and all the time having in his possession a letter from the solicitor confirming this statement and the opportunity of checking it by a reference to the solicitors on the other side and with whom he has been in constant contact.

Had matters ended here, however, I had not intended to trouble you further—as you can judge from the period which I have allowed to lapse.

When, however, I ask your attention to another enclosure, namely, the letter from a firm of City merchants, you will not be surprised that I should consider it my duty to ask you to investigate the circumstances. This letter simply confirms what I have been verbally told again and again, and it is

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

perfectly obvious that nothing but an official reprimand will bring the Official Receiver's staff to a sense of its duties.

I may add that so strongly have I felt upon the matter that I have seen the Treasury Solicitor and Public Prosecutor, Earl Desart, and that it is upon his suggestion that I address my complaint to you.

Yours faithfully,
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY.

A fortnight elapsed before any reply came, but in the meanwhile I understood that something in the nature of a Departmental Enquiry was going on. In due course I received the following letter. (Parenthetically I should observe that, owing to Mr. Brougham and his assistant having kept out of the box in the Guildhall proceedings, I was not able to get any of this correspondence out in evidence, and, consequently, I am now compelled to omit names.)

4th February, 1907.

Board of Trade,
Whitehall Gardens, S.W.

DEAR MR. BOTTOMLEY,—I have made very careful inquiry into the contents of Mr. ———'s letter, which you were so good as to send me, and I have received a full report on the subject from the Official Receiver. The gentleman referred to in the letter says that the writer of the letter is altogether mistaken in stating that he said that it was not intended to communicate the results of the Official Receiver's inquiry to the Directors, and he entirely denies that he used the words placed in inverted commas, or words of any similar purport.

I feel quite sure that you desire to assist the Official Receiver's inquiry in any way you can, and to clear up, so far as lies in your power, any outstanding questions about the shares and the share registers by taking steps to file the Statement of Affairs required of you under the Statute (which has, apparently, been due since the 22nd May last) compiled, as you suggest in your letter of the 8th inst., from the best material available to your hands.

Yours sincerely,
D. LLOYD GEORGE.

Horatio Bottomley, Esq., M.P.

I at once replied in the following terms:—

5th February, 1907.

The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George, M.P.,
Board of Trade, Whitehall, S.W.

DEAR MR. LLOYD GEORGE,—Many thanks for your letter of the 4th. I am extremely sorry to have put you to so much trouble in the matter, but it is one of some public importance. Of course the official concerned denies the statements made by my correspondent, but it is strange that similar statements are constantly reaching me, and it seems incredible that a large number of responsible and disinterested persons should be engaged in a conspiracy to invent these reports about the Winding-up Department.

Of course I desire to assist the Official Receiver as much as I can, but my difficulty is in making a junior clerk, of a highly suspicious temperament, understand matters of a complicated and technical character. I will do the best I can about lodging the Statement of Affairs, although it is mere form, inasmuch as the whole material constituting such Statement has long been in the possession of the Official Receiver, and formed the text of the statement placed before the shareholders by him months ago.

The suggestion that such Statement of Affairs has been due since the 22nd of May last is one of those many legal fictions inevitable in the working of the Winding-up Department—to the expense and uselessness of which it is my intention in due course to call attention. The Bankruptcy jurisdiction of the Board of Trade is in all conscience bad enough, but the Companies' Winding-up branch, I venture to suggest you will come to the conclusion before your term of office expires, is a screaming farce.

Yours sincerely,
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY.

Subsequently to this correspondence I had many interviews with Sir John Lawson Walton, with whom I was brought into constant personal contact over the Public Trustee Bill and the Criminal Appeal Bill—sitting with him upon the Special Committee appointed to consider the latter measure, and having many private conferences with him in regard to various of its provisions. Upon many of these occasions the conduct of the Winding-up Department was discussed between us. Lawson Walton and I had always been very close personal friends, he having in his earlier days at the Bar received a considerable amount of work from me and having also acted as Counsel for one of the defendants in the Hansard Union Trial. And now comes a narrative, which I should have told in much more detail had not death removed one of the parties from the scene. I say, however, *one* of the parties, because others are still living and occupying to-day very high positions in the inner councils of the Liberal Party.

An Abortive Compact.

I was at this time addressing frequent questions to Ministers as to the qualifications of Mr. Stewart for the post of Public Trustee, and was denouncing his appointment as a "scandalous job"; and on the Third Reading of the Appropriation Bill at the end of the session of 1907 I had carried the House with me against the appointment.

One day Lawson Walton came up to me in the House, and, taking a seat in the little box adjoining my corner, had a long and intimate conversation with me. As I write I have before me one of the leading Provincial papers, commenting in its Parliamentay Sketch upon the incident and speculating as to the subject of the discussion. What really happened was that I was urged to cease my attacks upon the Public Trustee, who, I was reminded, was by marriage and in other ways a man of great social influence—with the result that my attacks were being keenly resented "in certain high quarters." If I would desist from them, I should probably not be worried further in regard to the liquidation of my company, but otherwise "mud would be sure to be stirred up." To do him justice, it was obvious that Lawson Walton did not like the situation, and when I told him that it did not appeal to me he shrugged his shoulders and said, "Well, I can do no more—*except to promise you that nothing shall be done by the Treasury without my sanction.*"

Subsequently the suggestion was again made to me from other quarters, a Cabinet Minister and a high Party official each doing his best to bring about peace on the lines I have mentioned.

Meantime, I went doggedly on, attacking the Official Receiver on the one hand and the Public Trustee on the other—whilst papers were passing to and fro between the Treasury and the Board of Trade, with the result that in the end it was generously decided to apply for my Public Examination before embarking upon a prosecution! During all this time I was kept constantly informed, through various channels, of what was going on; and when in the month of August, 1907, the Order for Examination was duly made, and fixed for the following October, I went off for my annual "cure" at Carlsbad in perfect peace of mind, having, as already stated, had a final fling at the Public Trustee on the last day of the Parliamentary session.

Public Examination.

Then came the Examination, and here I must introduce the name of Carter and Bell, a firm of Solicitors whom I shall not libel when I describe them as not standing at absolutely the head of their profession. These people had been actively engaged in bringing about the compulsory winding-up of the Joint Stock Trust, and between them and myself feeling had run high. They were acting for the Receiver and Liquidator of the kindred Company, the Selected Gold Mines of Australia, and also for the petitioner in the winding up of the Joint Stock Trust. When I returned from my holiday for the purpose of the Examination, I found that this firm had been circularising shareholders and the Press, representing that they had been specially "ordered" to attend the proceedings, and I at once called the attention of the Registrar to their unprofessional conduct. He then explained that "with considerable reluctance" he had given them permission to attend the proceedings by Counsel on behalf of the Receiver of the Selected Company—and, although he did not say so in express terms, I think he was somewhat surprised to find that, in addition to misrepresenting this permission in the way they had done, they had also construed it as entitling them to engage Mr. Horace Avory, K.C., and another Counsel to appear at the Examination.

(To be concluded next week.)

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING.

SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

THE "MENSUR."

By Noel T. Methley.

The Berlin police have enforced the law prohibiting students' duels. As a result, a fresh lease of popularity will be granted to the silliest game that ever wasted the intellect and energy of intelligent young men. Certainly the authorities could have devised no surer means of invigorating the practice.

In fact, one is almost led to suspect that they desire to foster it; for, at any rate, it occupies the budding minds of those who will some day be German citizens, to the exclusion of absolutely everything else. As a pursuit, it is wholly unpractical and it encourages no dangerous tendencies.

There is only one thing that can kill the "Mensur," and that is ridicule, and even this powerful weapon will have to be wielded by a strong hand. The Teutonic youth is not keenly appreciative of humour, especially if that humour is directed against himself.

No Englishman who has ever witnessed one of these students' duels can fail to have been struck by the extreme futility of the whole exhibition.

Many years ago Mark Twain gave us a glowing account of one of these combats. His interesting and exciting description is generally taken as saying all that there is to be said on the subject. It has since been almost ignored by English writers.

Perhaps things have altered since then. Perhaps Mark Twain saw the sport in its noblest aspect, and what can be seen now is only a debased survival. Perhaps what obtains in one University is worked on different lines in another.

Be that as it may, we will describe an encounter as we saw it and leave the reader to judge. If Mark Twain's instance is typical of what is best, one may venture to think that this one is typical of what is most common.

The scene is a thatched barn, the treasured possession of a small semi-suburban restaurant situated beyond the limits of one of the largest University towns in Germany.

Within, the whitewashed walls are decorated with trophies of swords and banners and the combined colours of the corps who share the rooms. These were not corps, properly speaking, but "Burschenshaften," or Students' Guilds, constituted on the same lines but of a somewhat lower social status.

This barn was the joint stronghold of two of these associations.

At one end of the sanded floor was a raised daïs for the use of spectators. To the rear of this platform an open door led to the room where the white-coated surgeons dressed and stitched the "more or less" gaping wounds.

The visitors were received with a superfluity of etiquette, and were then left to their own devices.

After a long period of waiting, two pale-faced youths emerged from the surgery. Both were somewhat shaky at the knees, and were clad in old and tattered raiment that would not be spoilt by blood.

The arming of these two young gentlemen and their investiture with the panoply of war was a tedious process. To begin with, the throat, sword-arm, and other vulnerable portions of their anatomy were swathed in roll on roll of silk. Impervious jerkins and aprons of leather gave absolute protection to their bodies.

Their faces and heads were exposed, but their eyes were made safe by immense goggles, which were attached by binders, that also covered the ears. A little pad on either side of the chin guarded the facial arteries.

The aspect of the combatants when fully equipped was ridiculous in the extreme. It relieved the minds of the visitors of any qualms as to the effect on their humane sensibilities of the approaching bloodshed. Nothing which these absurd objects either did or suffered could be otherwise than funny. The heroic was banished from that moment.

The duellists were each provided with long, basket-hilted swords. These weapons have no points. They are very "whippy," and are sharpened like razors for eight inches of either edge.

The seconds now assumed their masks, leather armour and swords; the referee took up his position, note-book in hand; the senior surgeon, appeared, attired as for the clinic, and he carefully wiped the swords with an antiseptic; the room was filled with the martial reek of carbolic acid, and all was ready for the sanguinary affray.

The principals stood in constrained attitudes, with feet slightly separated, the sword-arm extended shoulder high.

All these preparations had taken a long time, perhaps half-an-hour. At last we were to be repaid for our patient waiting. "Los!" The umpire had said the word, the duel had begun. "Clash, clash, clash, clash, clash," as quickly as you can possibly repeat the words. "Halt!"

Up went the seconds' swords. The round was over. The swordsmen panted and perspired as if they had engaged in a long and arduous bout. A tiny red line appeared on one pallid cheek. The drops of blood welled up and trickled down the face. You know how it happens when you are cut shaving. You welter in gore before you feel the prick. The stern doctor hurried to render first aid with lint and antiseptic. It was indeed a bloody fight.

"Los!" "Clash, clash, clash, clash, clash." "Halt!" They did it all again. This time a little bit of scalp made a red spot on the whitewashed wall and the bloodshed was excessive. But it was no use. It was impossible to feel excitement, repugnance, or even sickness. In fact, no emotion could be aroused but hilarity, and that would probably have involved ejection.

It was not even interesting. Doubtless, a high standard of skill was exhibited, but the untrained eye was unable to follow the blades. One could not even distinguish between cut and guard.

At last, a wound was inflicted which involved many stitches. The doctor pronounced one of his charges to be unable to proceed from loss of blood. The other was proclaimed victor. Failing such intervention, the period of the duel would have been limited to fifteen minutes.

Many others followed, but all were the same. We had been warned before, and had not expected much, but we had, at least, looked for an exhibition of skill and pluck.

No doubt, the skill was marvellous to those who could appreciate it; but if the pluck were there, it showed itself in a wonderfully deceptive way.

Possibly there is an element of danger. The previous day, a student had been slit through both cheeks, but he must have opened his mouth to gasp, and, anyhow, such occurrences are very rare. Accidents occur in cricket and football, and even in marbles, if your opponent is quarrelsome and can use his fists.

To legislate for the suppression of the "Mensur" as a murderous practice, is rather as if we were to forbid beggar-my-neighbour as an encouragement to theft.

If the Kaiser really desires to stamp out this absurd parody of mediæval swashbuckling, he will have the sympathy of every sane man, but he must make a laughing-stock of the offender, and not a tinsel hero.

THE PRAYER FOR THE LANDLORDS.

Mr. James Platt, of St. Martin's Lane, writes us:—

In your issue of the 13th inst. you refer to the Prayer for Landlords which appeared in the Liturgy of Edward VI. Briefly, the supplication asked the Lord to keep the landlords in good order, that they "may not rack and stretch out the rents of their houses and lands, nor yet take unreasonable fines and incomes after the manner of covetous worldlings, but to let them out to others that the inhabitants thereof may be able to pay the rents, and also honestly to live, to nourish their families, and to relieve the poor."

Briefly as possible I will give the reasons why the legislators of 1909 should do for the leaseholders and town tenants what the clergy asked the Lord to do for them at the time of Edward VI.

If you want to build a house or houses, you have to pay for the use of the land at least four times its value for any other purpose; you get now a building lease for 80 or 99 years instead of 999 years 50 years ago. At the end of the building lease, the house you have built or bought has to be given up in good condition to the landowner; or, if he grants you a 21 years' lease, the rent is calculated upon the value of the land and house. If you take a private house upon lease, and turn it into a shop, or improve its value in any way during your tenancy, when you want to renew the lease an increased rent is demanded, according to its improved value from the money you have spent thereon.

The object of legislation should be "Justice for all, privilege to none," then at the end of a building lease the landowner would not have the right to take the house, *built or bought* by someone else, without paying for it; and a tenant ought to be able to get renewal of lease without paying an increased rent for improvements made during his tenancy, or, if he gives up the premises, he should be compensated for the improvements he has made thereto.

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Course on Voice Training, Singing, and Solfeggio. Course on the Pianoforte. On the Violin. On Harmonium and American Organ. On the Organ. Lessons on Scientific Basis of Music. Lessons on Rudiments of Music. Course on Harmony and Counterpoint. Lessons in Canon and Fugue. Lessons in Musical Forms, Analysis and Composition. Articles on the Instruments used in Orchestras and in Bands. History of Music. Articles on Children's Music and Musical Drill. On Choir Training and Conducting. Article on Congregational Music. Article on Musical Degrees. Nationality in Music.

Sir J. Frederick Bridge, Mus. Doc., Organist of Westminster Abbey, writes:—"The 'Musical Educator' is full of useful information plainly set forth. The musical illustrations are excellent."

(See form at foot of this page.)

The MODERN PHYSICIAN.

By Dr. ANDREW WILSON.

A Book for family reference on all matters relating to Health and Disease: includes descriptions of every part of the human frame—the skeleton, muscles, digestive system, heart and lungs, brain and nervous system, organs of sense, skin, kidneys, &c.; being fully explained and illustrated, by means of "mannikins" or dummies in which the various organs overlap each other precisely as they do in the human body. Hygiene and the Laws of Health are fully treated, and Ambulance and First Aid work is also dealt with. Special attention is paid to Physical Culture, foods, beverages, air, exercise, clothing, sleep, baths, holidays, temperament, &c., being treated as they relate to health. Home Nursing and the preparation of food for invalids are special features. The section devoted to "the Family Medicine Chest" gives the uses, properties and doses of drugs used as pills, drops, lotions, ointments or gargles. A complete collection of valuable recipes is added. One volume deals entirely with the Health of Women. Midwifery and the Health and Ailments of Infants and Children are fully treated.

Our readers may obtain a beautiful little brochure, post free, in which they will be told all about "The Modern Physician," and how they may obtain these five useful volumes for a first payment of 1s. 6d.

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The BEST BOOK ON GARDENING.

The "Century Book of Gardening" deals adequately and practically with every branch of horticulture, and with every detail relating to the contents of a garden.

There are over sixty sections in this work, each dealing with a branch of the subject. The beauty and variety of the illustrations, of which there are over 600, have never been approached; they include representations of the flowers, shrubs, plants, fruit, and vegetables, as well as of the insects, fungi, &c., &c., dealt with in this work.

While every branch of flower and plant life is treated of fully and in detail, this book covers every other branch of horticultural knowledge. Trees, shrubs, the greenhouse, orchid culture, roses and rose-gardens, bulbs, climbers, ferns (hardy and exotic), bamboos, vegetables, fruit trees, fruit farming and culture, hedges and borders, the long-neglected town garden, window-box, room, and roof gardening, soils and their treatment, insects and insecticides, fungi and fungicides, &c., &c.—this rough list gives but a taste of the thoroughness of the work.

(See form at foot of this column.)

A HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY.

By ROBERT FREKE GOULD.

This great work, of which a new edition is now appearing, is an exhaustive study of everything relating to Freemasonry its antiquities, symbols, constitutions, customs, and history; it includes much out-of-the-way information not otherwise obtainable, and a full investigation of the authentic records of the fraternity all over the world.

The fine illustrations include 36 magnificently coloured plates, illustrating Masonic clothing and regalia, high-class etched frontispieces, and fine engravings of Masonic Marks, Medals, and Plates of Arms.

Sir Edward Letchworth, Grand Secretary, Freemasons' Hall, London, W.C., writes:—

"At present I have only been able to glance cursorily through the 'History of Freemasonry,' but it strikes me as being a decided improvement on previous editions, and I hope you will have a good sale for it."

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THE PENNY IN THE SLOT GAS.

HOW A GREAT COMPANY HAS MULCTED THE POOR.

The Penny in the Slot System.

The penny in the slot system has been of considerable service to the working man who cannot get a supply of gas in the ordinary way. It has placed within his reach a convenient and fairly cheap method of lighting. The need for it is proved by the alacrity with which it has been utilised by those for whom it is intended. But those who have worked it out know that the man who uses the slot for his gas pays much more for it than the ordinary charge, and facts that have come to our notice disclose a state of things with regard to the customers of one great company which shows that many of them have been shamefully robbed by collectors.

Robbery of Slot Boxes.

Most of our readers will have noticed reports of the slot boxes being broken open and the contents taken from them. The companies supply the gas and make it a condition that the tenant gives five days' notice before he leaves his rooms, but in a large number of cases this notice is not given. This state of things has resulted in a certain section of the criminal population breaking into premises with the object of rifling the boxes and the loss to the gas companies has in consequence been considerable. Now, as we are informed, the incoming tenant has often, unconsciously, had to pay the loss accruing to the company from these thefts.

Politic Blindness.

Before going further we may say that in this article we refer only to the Gas Light and Coke Company, and that we do not suggest that the directors of this company have any knowledge whatever of the practice we are about to disclose. It is only necessary to run the eye down the list of directors to be sure that not one of them would be capable of stooping to the procedure that has been adopted. Nor do we suggest that the manager of the company, or that other highly placed officials, have directed the doings we are about to expose. But we do say that of necessity they must have been known to some of the ledger clerks, and that the attitude of certain of their immediate superiors has been one of politic blindness.

The Collectors and Undersetting.

The collectors of the Gas Light and Coke Company know that their employers dislike to see bad debts increasing, and, of course, the ordinary procedure precludes such debts. They arise from the thefts, and in order to cover them, these collectors have been in the habit of undersetting the meters, thereby giving less feet of gas. For example, on the north side of the river the customer gets 22 feet of gas for 1d. On the south side he gets 27 feet. A customer leaves the house in which he has been living, owing the company what is called in this connection a large debt, say 11s. or 12s.; or a small debt, say 4s. or 5s. If it is a large debt, then the meter is underset some 3 feet to 4 feet, and if a small debt, about 2 feet, and it remains underset until the meter has worked off the debt. Even then it is not always put right. For there are other debts due in the neighbourhood, and the collector goes on with this underset meter in order to wipe off the other debts quickly. In this way the collector avoids the necessity of having to report to the head office bad debts. The setting back is hidden from the customer, but it cannot be hidden in the books, because the accounts will show more money than they ought for the gas consumed. Thus the entry in the ledger shows a debit to the late tenant of, say 8s. A new tenant comes in. His account shows 12s. received. But he has only had 8s. of gas for his money. What is done with the 4s. in excess? It is credited to the bad debt account which it reduces to 4s., and the next surplus may wipe it out.

The Manager Takes Action.

We understand that this practice of cheating the poor has very recently, within the last few days, been brought to the notice of the manager of the Gas Light and Coke Company, and that upon receiving the information he summoned the staff concerned to meet him, and told them that there must be no repetition of these practices. That is all very well, but how is it that the manager has been left in the dark so long?

The "Irregularities."

What has happened, as we are informed, is this. Certain men have been dismissed for what the manager describes as "irregularities." They altered the index to avoid showing the debt instead of undersetting the meters. It was because they did this that they were dismissed. The altering the index was an improper thing to do, but it was better than undersetting. It robbed the company of nothing, the undersetting robbed the consumer. Yet the alteration of the index led to dismissal, but we do not gather that a single man has been dismissed for undersetting.

A Disingenuous Circular.

We are bound to say that the management of this company in its relation to consumers is anything but candid. For example, recently, at the beginning of the year, they sent out a notice that the price of gas would be reduced from 2s. 10d. to 2s. 9d. per 1,000 ft. On the scale up to 1,000 ft. the consumer had hitherto got a rebate of 2d.; the circular promises him 3d.—we are referring here only to the automatic meters. At 2,000 ft. he used to get 4d., and under the terms of the circular would now get 6d., but as a matter of fact he gets only 5d. So with 3,000 ft., on the old scale he got 6d., on the new scale he should get 9d. rebate, but in fact he gets 8d. To go to larger figures, at 10,000 ft. he used to get a rebate of 1s. 8d., according to the circular he should now get 2s. 6d., whereas he gets 2s. 1d. The reduction is not 1d. per 1,000 ft. as alleged by the circular, but ½d. It is a small matter, perhaps, but it is significant of the way in which the company does its business.

The Ordinary Meter.

Some of our readers may remember that last summer—in fact, in our issue of July 18th, 1908—we published a letter headed "Dishonest Gas Meters." It came to us from a partner in a large printing firm—not our own printers—who, having reason to doubt the accuracy of his meters, had three of the largest tested, and all three were found to be "fast." Thereupon our correspondent, satisfied that during previous years, and owing to the company's inaccurate meters, his firm had paid some hundreds of pounds for gas which it had never consumed, claimed from the company the return of £80, which very inadequately represented the money overpaid. This was met by the offer of a few shillings merely, being the amount of the estimated overcharge for the preceding quarter only. We are under the impression that the company is protected by its bye-laws against any claim covering a longer period than three months immediately preceding. But what is to be said of a company that falls back upon such a plea? Our correspondent was advised that although his firm had a good case and might get the £80 claimed, he would be wise to discontinue the action, as even if he gained the day the costs would probably more than swallow up the amount won. Upon this advice he acted. We may, however, add that he had another seven meters tested—six of which were fast and only one slow.

When the Company Acts.

If the company has the slightest reason to suppose that a meter is slow it very quickly takes steps to put it right; but who is there that can say that it has ever put right a fast meter? No doubt its position is technically correct. What it says is, if you think your meter is fast you can go to the County Council and get it tested, and if you are right you get your 5s. back and your meter corrected. But a great company like the Gas Light and Coke Company ought to be as quick to meet the complaints of customers in the matter of their meters, and see that those customers are not paying more for their gas than they ought to do, as they are to rectify a meter when they find it to be slow.

Our Hope.

But, after all, our chief concern here and now is with the poor man's meter—the automatic penny-in-the-slot meter. We say that the action of collectors of the Gas Light and Coke Company in undersetting the meters in order to get debts paid by people who do not owe them has been disgraceful in the extreme. We say that whilst we do not suggest for a moment that this has been done with the cognizance of the Directors, it must have been done with the knowledge of ledger clerks, and if it was done with their knowledge others above them, though how far we do not say, must have winked at it. Now the manager has prohibited such dishonest tricks. We trust the prohibition will be remembered by the collectors concerned—that it will not have a mere passing effect, and that things will not revert to the position before the prohibition—all too tardy—was promulgated.

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

"BRAIN HUNGER."

The SIMPLE SECRET of the MYSTERIOUS DISEASE NEURASTHENIA.

The most important contributions to medical literature made in our time, are the remarkable facts contained in the lecture recently written by the eminent nerve-specialist, Dr. A. Kuhner.

The work is vitally important for two reasons. FIRSTLY, it deals with the difficult, mysterious and increasingly prevalent disease Neurasthenia (which comprises ALL nervous disorders) — that most calamitous of diseases, which, until the present, has defied all attempts to cure.

SECONDLY, Dr. Kuhner's work deals critically with Antincurasthin, the Nerve Food and Tonic discovered by Dr. Hartmann, which has achieved such uniform and complete success in curing the hitherto incurable malady—Neurasthenia.

For reasons which will presently appear, Antincurasthin is the only effective remedy for Neurasthenia which has yet been discovered. Here—it is a completely effective and invariably successful remedy, as certain to benefit the nervous sufferer as a square meal is certain to benefit a starving man.

In very truth the matter cannot be put more simply or more exactly than by saying that Antincurasthin occupies precisely the same relation to all nervous sufferers as food does to the hungry.

CURED BY FEEDING.

Antincurasthin marks an entirely new departure in the treatment of nervous troubles; it cures by feeding and strengthening the nerves, and NOT — as in the case of drugs—by stimulation or deadening.

Let it be clearly understood that Antincurasthin is NOT a drug or medicine, but a FOOD which succeeds naturally by feeding, re-building, and re-vitalising the exhausted brain and nerves; Drugs, on the other hand, still further weaken and destroy the nervous system; their action being artificial and always followed by re-action.

There is the difference; and it is a great one. Antincurasthin works naturally by feeding, whilst drugs work artificially by stimulating. Antincurasthin has no ill after-effects; drugs invariably produce an evil re-action.

These are not Theories, but plain truths, recognised by the whole medical profession. There is not one word of our statement which the cleverest specialist would or could contradict or modify.

Antincurasthin is the ONLY known preperation containing an effective percentage of Lecithin in an active organic state; completely assimilable, and with its valuable principles undiminished in any way.

Lecithin is the ONLY substance by which the brain and nerves can be nourished, and it is LECITHIN which the system requires in all cases of Neurasthenic conditions (Nervous Disorders, Dyspepsia, Neuralgia, Brain-Fag, Insomnia, Depression, Insanity, etc.), If the brain and the nerves can be supplied sufficiently with Lecithin the cure is certain; Antincurasthin supplies that substance and effects the cure.

Doubtless it will be difficult for the nervous sufferer who has tried so many promising remedies without result to believe that the cause of his (or her) disorder is so simple and the cure so certain, and for that reason we have printed at the foot of this page a free offer of a trial supply. A remedy which has, in effect, the endorsement of the whole medical world, deserves a trial, and we are willing you should make that trial without cost.

You have proved drugs useless, too. Now try Antincurasthin and prove its value.

We are content to abide by the issue; all we ask is that readers will write for the books and the trial supply which we offer.

Two penny stamps should be enclosed.

Your application should be addressed to THE ANTINEURASTHIN CO., 61, Bolsover House, Eastcheap, London, E.C.

A Challenge without reserve

To demonstrate in unmistakable fashion that ANTINEURASTHIN occupies a position totally different from any known Curative or Food, for the restoring of the nervous system, we issue the following unqualified challenge to the whole world.

WE CHALLENGE any person or persons (including Doctors, Scientists, Analysts, Chemists, or Food Specialists) to prove that ANTINEURASTHIN does NOT contain Lecithin in its active organic state, or that it is not presented in a form by which the Brain and Nervous System may wholly benefit.

WE FURTHER CHALLENGE any person or persons to produce any other Food, Powder, or Liquid (apart from ANTINEURASTHIN) which does contain Lecithin in such a highly assimilable, concentrated and active form as to benefit the Brain and Nervous System to any appreciable degree.

AND WE FURTHER CHALLENGE any person or persons to disprove—in face of the fact that Lecithin forms the principal substance of the brain, spinal marrow and nerve tissues—that it is the only FOOD—and therefore indispensable for the building-up and natural invigoration of the whole Nervous System.

To Doctors, Chemists, Scientists, Analysts, and Food Specialists.

A FAMOUS PHYSICIAN'S CONFESSION OF DEFEAT.

The uselessness of drugs or medicines to cure Neurasthenia, and the impossibility of otherwise curing it prior to the discovery of Antincurasthin is strikingly expressed in the words of one whom we may truthfully call one of the cleverest and most famous of English doctors—a physician whose name is known all over the world.

Here is what he said to the students of St. Mary's Hospital: "I defy Sir Almroth Wright or anyone else to discover a vaccine for what I consider one of the most serious disorders of the present day—Neurasthenia, or nervous breakdown.

"By that I do not mean the born-tired feeling of the unemployable, or the blasé invertebrate condition of the born-rich without occupation, but the loss of nerve control and mental energy which comes to the neurotic when the nervous system is strained to breaking point, and the hapless sufferer drifts like a ship without a helmsman, storm-tossed on the sea of his emotions."

If these words mean anything at all, they mean that a man at the very top of the professional tree knew and confessed that there was no drug or medicine known which would cure Neurasthenia.

It is still true that—apart from Antincurasthin — medical science knows NOTHING which will cure Neurasthenia.

A sufferer — personally known to the writer — was told by two nerve specialists in London that he "could take barrels of their medicines without the least chance of a cure."

The position has been this, that, knowing the impossibility of cure by drugs, the medical profession has simply used them to alleviate pain or to stimulate action. It was the only thing they could do in the circumstances.

The whole case for Antincurasthin is readily proved by FACTS in the form of cures achieved, and we are able and willing to furnish UNLIMITED proof of this kind in the shape of unsolicited and genuine testimonials of the marvellous effects of Antineurasthin on neurasthenic conditions of every kind.

From every direction we daily receive further convincing testimony to the uselessness of drugs on the one hand, and to the remarkable success of Antincurasthin on the other hand.

The success of Antincurasthin, in brief, is everywhere attested; it rests not only upon medical, journalists' or lay opinion, but upon the solid and unassailable foundation of ESTABLISHED FACT.

To sum up, "Antincurasthin" cures with absolute certainty—anyone may take it in any quantity—no ill after-effects—every atom consumed is a definite step to recovery; every fact stated is capable of PROOF.

THE CASE FOR ANTINEURASTHIN

and the Cause and Cure of Nervous Disorders (Neurasthenia) are ably expounded in the two scientific treatises which we offer to send (together with a trial supply of Antincurasthin) GRATIS to readers of "John Bull."

With these pamphlets in their possession readers will be enabled to weigh the case for Antincurasthin in the scales of their own unprejudiced judgment; by means of the trial supply they will be in a position to make a practical test of the effectiveness of the remedy.

We are content to abide by the issue; all we ask is that readers will write for the books and the trial supply which we offer.

Two penny stamps should be enclosed.

Your application should be addressed to THE ANTINEURASTHIN CO., 61, Bolsover House, Eastcheap, London, E.C.

A HIDEOUS HOLIDAY.

By Jim Crow.

(Greatly delayed in transmission.)

Not feeling quite my old genial self amid fogs and rains, I suddenly conceived the unfortunate idea that "a little change" would do me good. The puzzle was where to go. Barcelona tempted me, as it always does, with its combination of cheerfulness and dignity. Biarritz might have done, but I read in the papers that Arthur Balfour was there, and that would have turned all my cream sour. There seemed nothing for it but to run down to Monte Carlo and bask in the sunshine.

The "Azure Coast."

So I submitted to be packed like a sardine among perspiring Germans, to be rolled and shaken and irritated in the most expensive and uncomfortable train in the world. The "Azure Coast" at last! The irony of the name surpasses even the superstitious nomenclature accorded by the ancients to the tempestuous Euxine. I arrived coughing and shivering to find snow low down upon the mountains, winds as raging and tearing as a Brummagen propaganda, rains as violent as any I have ever encountered in the tropics, a wilderness of frost-bitten palms and blighted lemons. Before many days I could have served as a human document for an all-healing pill. Languor, lassitude, ophthalmia, nasal catarrh, nervous prostration, nose-bleeding, swollen feet, anarexia, all ailments took possession of my devoted carcase. The only wonder was that one frail body could entertain so vast a multitude of microbes.

Blood and Baccarat.

Of course I aroused no pity. People said airily that they supposed I spent too much time in the gambling rooms, where, by the way, the air would not precisely commend itself to a factory inspector. But even the wise and prudent suffered quite as much as I. One man told me that his nose began to bleed while he was playing baccarat, but as he was turning up eights and nines all the time, he had to go on until all the cards were stained with gore. The chorus of coughs in the Casino rivals that in a fashionable church at sermon-time. Residents, however, tell me that one is eventually acclimatised. That, however, does not render the Riviera appropriate for "a little change." A change is certainly afforded, but it is so violent that only the most hardy can endure it.

A Homily for Gamblers.

There may not be much physical harm involved in the passion for play, but I am convinced that it has a bad moral effect. It may even produce lesions of the brain for all I know or care. Anyhow, you find people who would be punctiliously scrupulous about money matters at home suddenly behave in the most surprising way. It is as though some latent turpitude were called out by the emotions of the game. Racing does not have this effect, but then the most ardent patron of the Turf does not have more than six bets a day, whereas at Monte Carlo you may win or lose a fortune every minute. The vicissitudes are almost incredible. One day (or one hour) a man may go about with thousands of pounds in his pockets, enjoying the best of everything, giving himself all the airs and graces of a newly-made millionaire; then you will see him wandering about listlessly with his hands in empty pockets, trying to borrow a few silver coins for his lunch or his cigars. The sudden transitions between penury and affluence are so disturbing that only people with the strongest wills ought ever to face the ordeal. And the transitions between wild joy and abysmal grief are far more dangerous to the system than it would be to jump incessantly from the tropics to the Polar seas.

Subsidiary Suspicion.

The atmosphere of gambling affects others beside the gamblers. Everywhere in the neighbourhood of the Principality, suspicion is supreme. Nowhere else, I imagine, is credit so grudgingly allowed. Even quite well-to-do people are expected to pay ready-money for everything, and are liable to be thrown into the street if their hotel-bills are a few days in arrear. I have heard strange tales of trouble in this unnatural place. Fancy a respectable British family being suddenly informed, on returning to dress for dinner, that their rooms were let and their luggage confiscated! No other hotel would take them in without luggage, and they might have been left to tramp the Casino Square all night, but for the fortuitous hospitality of some good Samaritans.

A Silly Strike.

Such possibilities of disaster have been recently aggravated by the telegraph strike in Paris. The other day I went to send an important message, and was told that communications were now irregular. I said I supposed that at any rate my message would reach London that night, but the answer was that nothing could be guaranteed. Next day I went to send another telegram, and found a notice up that all telegraphic communication was suspended in the case of Paris, England, Germany, &c. Imagine the frightful inconvenience of this. Some may be ruined through inability to ascertain the movements of stocks and shares; others may be debarred from soothing the dying moments of those they love; every conceivable anguish may be caused by the wicked imbecility of a few ill-conditioned officials. It only shows how helplessly dependent upon modern inventions and labour combinations we are, and that they have their bad side also.

The Curse of Progress.

If I had travelled out to Monte Carlo a hundred years ago, I should have made my will and a thousand other arrangements before I started. Nowadays I merely tell my man to pack a portmanteau, and I leave everything to chance, reflecting that "one can always wire." But now one can't wire, and I begin to grow anxious. They say the railway sorters are striking too, so perhaps there will presently be no letters either. Then we shall begin to relish the charms of social-democratic agitators. Meanwhile, I should like to know why a strike in Paris should dislocate the greater part of the telegraphic service of Europe. Surely it ought to be possible to despatch telegrams some other way round, say by Vienna or New York or Timbuctoo, rather than leave us all benighted. But French red tape is inexorable.

Perfect Organisation.

The administration of Monte Carlo is far superior to that of France. An especially vigilant police is no doubt necessary in a place which attracts all the riff-raff of the world, and the police here are so efficient that, before any person has been twenty-four hours in the place, a dossier has been drawn up not only of his antecedents, income and comparative honesty, but of the way he spends his time, the people he frequents, and the amounts he wins or loses. The officials of the Casino are even more highly trained than the police. I am told they go through the most elaborate drill imaginable to prepare them for every eventuality, from a bomb to a suicide. The one haunting obsession is to avoid a fuss at all costs. On one occasion a man shot himself at the tables. People came hurrying from all parts of the rooms, but they found no trace of anything. The body had been whisked away in no time, blood and brains had been wiped up, even those who sat near the victim began to wonder whether they had not dreamed. And the game went merrily on: *Messieurs, faites le jeu. . . . Rien ne va plus. . . . Treize, Noir, Impair et Manque.* For the first time in a long experience of Monte Carlo, I lately witnessed a row in the rooms. Two men came to blows. In a twinkling, one of them was surrounded by officials, expostulating in undertones and gently hustling him to a great mirrored door. A few minutes later he emerged, chastened and contrite, and I saw his face no more. I wish the French postal officials could be sent to Monte Carlo to learn the elements of their business.

Beleaguered.

P.S. (*much later*).—My worst fears have been realised. After being deprived of the use of telegraph wires for days, I found a notice at the Post Office, that no mails were passing to or from Paris and beyond. I can, therefore, send or receive no news unless some through traveller can be caught and impressed as my special messenger. Except that, at a pinch, I can creep into a train, I might as well be in a town beleaguered by the Boers. This morning the illusion of a siege was reinforced by the booming of guns in honour of the fête or a battleship. Every moment I expected to hear a shell come whistling about my ears. I could sympathise with the unfortunate people who have lost all their ready money at the tables and are unable to send for more. In this land of ready money they will experience all the agonies of a siege, down to privations of food, and even the menace of starvation! Moreover, no one has the faintest idea how long it may be before the siege can be raised.

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

WAR OFFICE ACTIVITY.

A Leicester correspondent tells us that the Secretary of the local Chamber of Commerce recently received the following letter from the War Office:—

> As you are probably aware, it has been the practice of the War Office to receive and open tenders at noon. It is found, however, that from the departmental point of view this is inconveniently late, and a proposal is under consideration to fix an earlier hour—say 11 o'clock.
>
> I am anxious, however, to study the convenience of the commercial world, and before making any change should be glad if you would be good enough to inform me whether, in the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce, an earlier hour than noon would be equally convenient to firms in your neighbourhood.
>
> So far as postal arrangements are concerned, a reference to the Postal Guide would seem to show that if the hour were fixed at 11 no practical inconvenience would arise even to those situated at a very considerable distance from London.

We readily identify ourselves with our correspondent's observations upon the above communication, which, he says, "seems to indicate that the War Office is still an active Department, and in order to arouse similar virility in the Provinces submits a most important proposal (no mention is made how many times the officials of the Department have been called together to consider this matter) for the consideration of Chambers of Commerce all over the country, which means a few thousand business men meeting at an inconvenience to themselves to discuss absolute twaddle. Cannot you do something to instil common sense and efficiency into our Governmental Departments? My suggestion is that the personnel of this particular Department should meet at 9 a.m., the tenders would occupy about 15 minutes. *i.e.*, with such comprehensive brains, and then what an opportunity for golf or marbles for the remainder of the day! I am sure you will agree that this would be a gain to the country."

THE "TELEGRAPH" VETERANS' FUND.

With reference to the letter from Mr. James Hounsom, which appeared in our issue of March 20th, we have received the following letter from Major Craig, the Secretary of the Fund. Major Craig writes:—

> My attention has been drawn to a letter from the above-named man, with reference to this Fund, in the last issue of your paper.
>
> The facts in the case are simple:
>
> Early last year he applied for help from here, and the local representative of the S. and S. H. Society was asked to make inquiries into the case. He reported that the man and his wife ran a laundry, but that, as they were of the opinion that it did not pay sufficiently well, they proposed giving it up. A reply was at once sent asking if the case might be again referred, when this had taken place, and his income had been reduced below the 13s. weekly limit laid down by this Fund.
>
> In February of this year, having heard nothing further, I wrote for a report to date, receiving a reply to the effect that they still had the laundry, which was apparently in a flourishing condition, as evidence of which it was pointed out that the man had been refused an old-age pension, owing to his income being over the 13s. limit laid down by the Act.
>
> It is, therefore, not at present possible to deal with the case from this Fund, our limit being the same as the old age pension, and the gentleman who inquired into the case for us was so informed by return of post on February 8th last.

TO WOMAN, THE EQUAL OF MAN.

("Woman is equal to man."—General Booth, Capetown, 1908.)

"Equal to man"! Hast, dotard, liv'd in vain?
How worse betray thy lack of taste and *nous*!
Wise—foolish woman! Weak, yet strong—in pain;
Revered world-wide as "Goddess of the House";
Coy, fickle—faithful, fond—then all disdain;
Not scared by death, but sore afraid of mouse!
Thy beauty lives enshrined in all the creeds!
Madonna, Venus, Isis, bear thy face;
Thy love spurs hero on to deathless deeds;
Thee Justice pardoned—for thy matchless grace!*
To curb thy whim, men make the Law—then break;
For thee, slaves delve the gold—the diamond beams;
Of thee the poet sings—the sculptor dreams;
And the high gods turned mortal—for thy sake!

AFRICANUS.

* In the person of Aspasia, mistress of Pericles, B.C. 604

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A POINT OF LAW.

By N. H. D.

It wasn't an old armchair, or a brass bedstead, or anything of that sort; it was £500 in hard cash. I don't know why "hard" cash, only it sounds more grand like. £500 in hard cash.

It was my first cousin's husband's sister left it to me. Always good friends we was, pore thing—had fourteen teeth out together the same day and we never forgot it.

Of course, I went to the funeral, and a very select affair it was too, only that Mrs. Benders put on such airs, sniffing at a smelling bottle she was all the time, and ses everyone as was a lady carried a smelling bottle at a funeral—made me that wild it did, for who's she, I'd like to know.

When we got back from the cemetery, there was a very nice tea all laid out and we was very merry together, and I couldn't help thinking how the pore corpse would have enjoyed herself if she'd been with us.

After tea the loryer come in—dressed-up ape *he* was, too—and then he begins to read the will, and presently he ses, "£500 to Eliza Akers." You could have knocked me down. "Hold me," I ses, "I feel faint." "Have my smelling bottle," ses Mrs. Benders, languid like. *That* brought me round. "*No*, thank you," I ses, with a sort of shiver, "I won't deprive you of it."

Well, when I got home, my old man come to the door. "Good luck to you, old girl," he ses. "What do *you* know about it?" I ses. "Oh," he ses, "George Tonkers has been along and told me, he did; it's all over the place by now, and Mrs. Vider she came in and asked how you was."

"*That* woman!" I ses. "Haven't I told you I won't have her in my house? *I* can show my lines," I ses; "she *may* be able to—that's all *I* say, she *may*—but she can keep her brazen face out of *my* house, the hussy!"

Would you believe it, the very next morning, up she come again, and knocked at the door, and when I opened it, there she was smiling away and saying she *had* to come and see how I was.

"I'm quite well, I thank you," I ses, orty like, "but I'm rather busy just now as I'm expecting a visit from my loryer, so I will say good-morning to you."

"Oh dear me!" she ses, "ain't we proud all at once because a pore half-witted creature we got the blind side of was bamboozled into leaving us a bit of money."

With that she give a sneering sort of laugh and went off.

I could have boxed her ears, and when I went in there was Thomas setting behind the kitchen door with a sheepish look on his face as though he'd stole a purse.

"I say, old girl," he ses, "if you go on like this I shall be ashamed to show my face out of doors." "You're a perfect fool," I ses; "you'd let everyone tread on you, I suppose. You just walk upstairs and put on your best clothes, and when that loryer feller comes we'll be setting in the parlour and let him see we're used to things."

Presently up comes my gentleman and banged at the door, he did, as though it was made of iron. Thomas opened it, and when he showed him into the parlour, I was setting back in the armchair with a book in my hand. "Oh, good morning," I ses, looking up surprised like, and clipping my words off short; "what very nice weather we're having." "Delightful," he ses. "And now to business, Mrs. Akers."

With that he went on talking a lot of nonsense about estates, and legacy duties, and probits, or some such word, and then, if you please, ended up with, "So I shall hope in the course of a few months to be able to send you a cheque for £450."

"£500 you mean, I think," I ses, in a quiet sort of voice.

"My dear Mrs. Akers," he ses, "haven't I just explained to you that being no relative of the decoased you have to pay ten per cent. legacy duty, therefore you receive £450?"

"What, you swindling hound," I screams, "do you mean to say your going to thieve £50 of mine?" "It's the lor, madam," he ses, turning very red.

"Lor," I ses, sneering like; "a pretty sort of lor to let pore people be robbed so that a parcel of jumped-up fools can dress up and go about pretending to be gentlemen."

"I wish you good morning, madam," he ses, snatching up his bag in a vicious sort of way.

"That's a fair knock-out," ses Thomas, coming back from shutting the front door.

"Thomas," I ses, solemn like, "you mark my words and remember them when I'm laid under the green turf," I ses. "Never have nothing to do with lor or loryers."

"I'll watch it," ses Thomas.

A good Gun costs £50—the Sportsman who buys one never thinks of going to a Firm who makes the £5 variety—he knows that the Trades are quite distinct.

Bicycles are made like Guns—a Firm can either make a common Bicycle or a good Bicycle, but IT CANNOT MAKE BOTH, for it must of necessity employ the *same* Workmen, the *same* Tools, the *same* Processes, and the *same* Supervision.

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Please mention this paper.

THE BLUNDERING OF MINISTERS.

THE LACK OF BUSINESS INSTINCT.

It is astonishing how leading members of the present Government create difficulties for themselves which a little common-sense would avoid. Recently Mr. Haldane was persuaded to make what is called a new departure. He decided to give soldiers the opportunity of learning trades. The idea was that a man with a trade would be in a better position to obtain work than a man without one. He would pass into the class of skilled and organised labour instead of into the casual employment section of the community, and it was assumed, apparently, by Mr. Haldane, although erroneously, that there is little or no unemployment in the ranks of skilled labour. Be that as it may, one would have thought that before putting the scheme into operation he would look at it all round. Now it would have occurred to an ordinary business man that there might be trouble with the trade unions, and this ordinary business man would have seen the necessity for communicating with the trade unions and ascertaining whether he would have to reckon with opposition from them or not, and whether, if opposition were inevitable, the scheme was worth proceeding with. But this very obvious precaution does not seem to have occurred to Mr. Haldane, or if it was ever present to his mind he discarded it as unnecessary. The scheme has been put into force. Soldiers are learning trades—engine-driving and the like—and the leaders of the trade unions are much disquieted. They consider the position so created a grave one, and the matter will come up for discussion at the Conference at Blackpool.

Whether the fears of the trade unions are groundless or not, and the exact objections taken by the trade unions to the official scheme mentioned above, we do not propose to consider here and now. We shall have something to say about these points on another occasion. What we want to emphasise is the curious lack of common-sense displayed by Ministers. We are told of a certain number of soldiers who have actually begun to learn trades, but it occurred to them that if having learnt the trade and left the Army, they found themselves boycotted by the trade unions, they would be in no better position than they were before they mastered the trade. And so, not like Secretaries of State with colossal intellects, but only like plain humble men, they thought it prudent to consult a leading trade union official as to how they would be received by the trade unions in the event of their learning a trade and claiming membership. What the leading official said to them in reply need not be mentioned here. Our point is that whereas these plain soldiers took the right and obvious step in communicating with the trade unions, it did not occur to the Secretary of State to take the same precautionary step, with the result that he may find himself before very long in sharp conflict with the trade unions, with political and other consequences that may be of a formidable kind.

It is the tale of the Navy over again. The Prime Minister pledges himself to a two-Power standard and 10 per cent. over without troubling to enquire whether it is possible for us to maintain that standard, and so a few weeks afterwards we find him creating a panic by going down to the House and telling it, and an amazed country, not only that we are not maintaining the two-Power standard, but that unless we do something extraordinary in the way of construction, not even suggested by the extremists a few months ago, we shall soon be below even a one-Power standard. And yet with the boundless resources of the Government behind him, it should have been easy enough for him to get at the truth and to avoid these humiliating miscalculations, just as Mr. Haldane might have avoided the threatened troubles of the trade unionists, if only he had acted as any plain business man would have done in the circumstances. This country seems to be ruled by amateurs who do not grow, and one of these days it will pay heavily in blood and treasure for leaving the control of the country's affairs in such hands.

A LIMERICK.

For pitching a tale of deep knavery
There is no one to beat Horace Avory;
But his facts were "sae puir"
That we need not say "Muir,"
Further comment might be too unsavoury.

W. D.

Cailler's

THE GENUINE SWISS

MILK CHOCOLATE

In 1d., 3d., 6d., and 1s. Tablets, and 2d., 3d., 6d., and 1s. Croquettes and Napolitans.

The full flavour and aroma of Milk-Chocolate can only be enjoyed when wrapped and packed as by Cailler's in the above form. Therefore

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NEW COMPETITION, 1909.

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Prizes of exceptional value will be distributed every Three Months as follows:—

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£25, £20, £15, £10, Two of £5, Ten of £2, also 50 Handsome Travelling Clocks in leather cases, in gilt and oxidised silver; 50 Gents' superior Watches; 50 Ladies' Watches with Brooches; 200 Handsome Boxes of Chocolate, value 7s. 6d.

PRESENTS FOR ALL.

Competitors sending in Outside Wrappers to the value of 6s. will be presented with a Box of Chocolates for each Six Shillings' worth of Wrappers. At the end of twelve months Special Cash Prizes will be given for those sending in the largest number of Wrappers irrespective of value.

The above prizes will be distributed to those Competitors sending in the largest number of Outside Wrappers taken from Cailler's 1d., 3d., and 6d. Tablets, and 2d., 3d., and 6d. Croquettes.

SHILLING TABLETS AND CROQUETTES ARE NOT ELIGIBLE

in this competition. Wrappers for the four quarterly competitions during 1909 must be sent in before April 30th, and July 31st, and October 31st, 1909, and Jan. 31st, 1910, respectively, postage and carriage paid. Wrappers must be tied together, and should be marked with their face value, together with full name and address of competitor (state if lady or gentleman) to Cailler's Competition Offices, 8 and 10, Duke Street, Liverpool.

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Has been Imitated by many, but Never Equalled.

OPEN LETTERS POST-CARDS AND TELEGRAMS.

To Lieutenant Shackleton, Iceberg Villa, New Peleland.

My dear Shack,—I am writing to assure you that you do me proud. As I am informed, you went in the *Nimrod* on a voyage of discovery in the Antarctic Circle, hoping to find the South Pole. Though you have not found it, I understand that you have planted the Union Jack on latitude 88 deg. 23 min. and longitude 162 east, which I take to be the 115-mile limit. I hope you were received without question as a *bona-fide* traveller. Max O'Rell once said that in England heaven was generally regarded as a British possession. Thanks to you, I assume that I may now add the latitude and longitude aforesaid to my estates. Accept my warmest thanks. I am sure you will appreciate them. It is very cold out there.

Now that I am the proud possessor of lat. 88 deg. 23 min., also of long. 162 east, will you be good enough to inform me what I am to do with 'em? Are the foundations secure? Will they do for building purposes? Any of the precious metals about? Any prospects for the unemployed? Any use for a Partington hoarding to advertise the works of your humble J.B.? Any chance of a German invasion before I get the *Dreadnoughts* out? Any use for a police force, a County Council, an income tax assessor, a rate or a rent collector, a lamplighter, a parson, a publican, Mr. Horace Avory, an M.P., or other unnecessity of civilisation? I shall expect to have all details when you arrive to address the Royal Geograf. You can have a knighthood, or a baronetcy, or a peerage, or a gold medal, or something of that sort.

I am delighted to know that you have found coal there, and I do hope you used some of it to keep you warm. Also glad that you have found definite indications of vegetation. I am myself an amateur gardener, and if you will kindly bring back a good specimen of an antarctic carrot, orchid, cabbage, carnation, polygorum baldschuanicum, onion, or escallonia macrantha, I shall receive it with my most gracious favour. How do you find the soil for potatoes out there, by-the-by? Think it needs any feeding up with long strawy manure, basic slag, gypsum, Ichthemic guano, superphosphate, bone meal, sulphate of ammonia, or nitrate of soda? Are the roses ever troubled with green-fly, and what do they use for wire-worm, millipedes, mildew, rust, and red spider? Please prepare yourself with information on all these points. Lord Carrington, my Minister for Agriculture, may want to parcel out lots under the Small Holdings Act.

When may I expect you in town? Commander Scott, who I believe was out your way some time ago on the *Discovery*, but did not discover quite as much as you have done, tells me that "your journeys are some of the most magnificent recorded in Polar history," and he ought to know. Anyhow, my dear Shack, I am taking his word for it, so this is to certify that when you return you are authorised to come and grip the hand of your admiring and faithful friend, John Bull.

To Sir Samuel Chisholm, Ex-Lord Provost, Glasgow.

Sir,—You are well-known in Scotland as a magistrate who does not regard with favourable eyes either those who apply for liquor licences or those who have them. And I notice the remarkable temperance speech you made in Edinburgh the other day. On the general question of teetotalism I shall not follow you; but, if you please, I should like a little more evidence to justify those allegations of attempted bribing of licensing magistrates which you made against several unnamed members of the Trade. I do not say they are not true, Sir Samuel Chisholm; all I say is, that I do not believe them.

You told your Edinburgh audience that the obscure cases which you cited were "within your own knowledge." Unless a bribe has been offered to you personally, or unless you were present when the attempt to bribe other magistrates was made, or unless you have documents the genuineness and authenticity of which you can prove, the cases are not within your own knowledge. I gather, as a matter of fact, that you merely repeated what you have been told; as the mother of Moses may have been told the story of the Flood by Jacob, who had it straight from Shem, who was on friendly terms with Methusaleh, who knew Adam quite well. For I notice you say, "I know of" a magistrate who was seriously asked by a prospective applicant for a licence if he would accept £200 and take his holidays while the Bench was sitting; "I know of" a magistrate who was canvassed for his vote on the bench, and when the applicant left found on his desk an envelope containing £50 addressed to the magistrate's wife; "I know of" a publican who admitted that he had given £600 that it might be divided among a Bench to whom he was about to apply for a licence. What is one to think of all this except that it is inadequate, grossly inadequate, as evidence? Why did not the magistrates to whom the bribes were offered speak out when the persons stigmatised made their applications? What a splendid opportunity they missed to prove their unassailable virtue; what headlines for the newspapers; what a text for the teetotal leader-writers! And why when they have kept silence so long, have they put you up to reveal their awful secret "of your own knowledge"? And why do not you name the men and name the magistrates in the interests of public justice?

No, no, Sir; these stories will not do at all. They are spoiled by an antecedent incredibility. I cannot credit that Scotch teetotal magistrates, offered a money bribe to poison the Court of Justice, would delegate their courage and their duty to so diffident a champion of their honour as you. I know there is a libel law, Sir, but why should *you* be afraid of it? So once more, if you please, Sir Samuel Chisholm, let us have the names. Out with them, and be a man. John Bull.

To Jem Mace, Northampton Buildings, Clerkenwell.

Dear Jem,—Such is life, and such are the changes and chances of life. Time was, I believe, when you were the darling of the Prize Ring, when all the world was applauding you, and throwing up its hats for you; when you were making your fortune like an Archbishop or a music-hall artist. Time is, when a few weeks short of 78, you are applying at the Goswell Road Post Office for a form to fill up that you may procure an old-age pension. In the long stretch of years between your first and last victorious fight you became the pugilistic father of all those eminent persons who have carved their way to fortune and to glory by hitting other people as hard as possible anywhere above the belt—from the head to the claret tap and from the claret tap to either kidney. Don't I remember, Jem, that when you had knocked out everybody who was anybody you crossed the deep and dark blue ocean and ran an hotel in Sydney with a boxing saloon somewhere at the back; that there you taught Larry Foley as much as he could assimilate, and that Larry Foley taught what you had taught him to Peter Jackson, Fitzsimmons, Hall, Creedon, and Griffo?

It is a far cry that, you will say. But it is a cry that is true, Jemmy; and while I don't understand much about your special art myself, I confess that I am a little surprised that in these days of multifarious "benefits," the National Sporting Club has not arranged a Grand Final Benefit performance for you, especially as you seem in terrible need of the money. How you have lost all you made, Jem, is none of my affair. Perhaps you might have saved; perhaps you didn't. Whatever the fault, or the misfortune, Jemmy, you are down. *Is* there a National Sporting Club? John Bull.

Lady Constance Lytton, Suffragette, Clement's Inn, London.

Sorry hear your complaint that Holloway officials would not allow you to scrub. Next time tell magistrate, then perhaps he will send you to Wormwood Scrubbs.
Bull.

Kaiser Wilhelm, Berlin.

Observe order for laying down three *Dreadnoughts*, one *Invincible*, and several torpedo craft passed Reichstag without discussion. One of most brilliant flashes of silence I have ever heard. Bull.

George Petrovitch Karageorgewitch, Belgrade, Servia.

Have taken notice of your renunciation of succession to Servian throne. Are you entering a lunatic asylum?
Bull.

Lord Charles Beresford, Carlton Club.

Hurry up and come to the House. What times we shall have—Great Scott!
Bull.

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

SIGHT TESTING.

John Bull: "I can see the bottom line, but the others appear to be fading!"

IN THE CITY.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA TOWNSHIPS, LTD.

Some Questions for the Directors.

In our issue of March 13th we tabulated a series of specific questions which we suggested it would be advisable for the shareholders in Kaffirs Consolidated, Ltd., to put to the Directors of that Company.

That there were good grounds for our questions has been proved by what occurred at the general meeting of the shareholders on March 17th, when the information was with difficulty extracted from a reluctant chairman that £60,000 of the Company's money had been lent to the London and Paris Exchange on unrealisable (and, in our opinion, worthless) security.

We would now suggest that it would be advisable for shareholders in British South Africa Townships, Ltd. to ascertain from their Directors whether by any strange coincidence any of their money has gone in the same direction.

An issue of £100,000 in ordinary shares was made by this Company only so recently as last autumn, and—so it was officially announced—fully subscribed.

The Directors of the Company were:—

Robert Warner, who has recently been prominent as the Chairman of the ill-fated Kaffirs Consolidated, Ltd.

Edwin Mandeville—presumably a relation of Alexis.

Hervey de Montmorency, who was euphemistically described as a gentleman, but who, if our information is correct, was merely the paid clerk of Mr. Mandeville.

In view of facts which have come to light since the collapse of the London and Paris Exchange, it is imperative on shareholders to ascertain positively whether these names really constitute an independent Board of Directors as they held themselves out to be, or whether, so far from representing the shareholders, they have really been acting in the interest of a third party.

At the same time no time should be lost in ascertaining what has been done with the Company's money, and under whose control it now is.

LEVER BROTHERS, LTD.

We have received the following letter:—

> I was much interested in your article on the balance sheet of Lever Bros., Ltd. I think I can let a little light on how it was they did so much trade in the last three months. At the beginning of last year they formulated the following scheme to induce their customers to push their goods, viz.:—3s. per cwt. or gross would be allowed if they made a 10 per cent. increase and upwards over the year 1905; 2s. per cwt. or gross if they did a 5 per cent. increase over 1905; 1s. per cwt. or gross if they did the same quantity as 1905; 6d. per cwt. or gross if they did less than 1905. Lever Bros. did not allow this in cash, but it had to be taken out in bicycles, watches, typewriters, scales, etc., etc., at considerably over three times the value paid for them by Messrs. Lever. I estimate those that got the 10 per cent. increase would get about a 5 per cent. allowance on their year's trade. To induce the public to buy, they introduced a number of soaps bearing coupons, one soap bearing two coupons (one a 1d. for the user, and one ½d. for the seller), by these means they were enabled to get rid of a large quantity of soap (which has by no means been disposed of).
>
> They also give a yearly bonus on all trade done, amounting to £1 to £2 per £100 to retailers, and to wholesalers £2 to £4 per £100. With these two strings to their bow, Lever Bros.' travellers pushed the soaps during the last quarter of the year for all they were worth.
>
> Firstly, to get their customers to make up the 10 per cent. increase, and secondly, in the last month of the quarter, they would push them to take a little more to make their yearly bonus larger.
>
> Now comes an interesting fact for you. On January 1st they issued a new price list, reducing "Sunlight" £4 per ton, under a plea of the reduction in the cost of raw materials, whereas the price of soapmaking material on that day was from £1 to £2 higher than on the corresponding day last year (and has since gone higher).
>
> I cannot see how their profit-sharing concern can be of much service to the Company:—
>
> 1. Because a large number of their employés are on piece work.
>
> 2. The cost of each department has been most carefully kept, and comparisons made, so that the supervisor of that department would have been quickly called to account if his expenses were not kept down. Moreover, there is a system of pitting one department against another, so that I cannot see that they can in any way get more work out of their employees.

THE PROVIDENT CLOTHING AND SUPPLY COMPANY, LTD.

With reference to numerous enquiries as to this Company the following information may be useful:—

> Some twenty or thirty years ago a Clothing Club was started in Bradford by a man called J. Waddilove, the system being "easy payments," *i.e.*, Waddilove arranged with certain shops to supply his club members with clothing, boots, etc., on the presentation of a form of cheque issued by Waddilove, the member to pay Waddilove the amount of the cheque, say 20s., in weekly instalments of 1s. plus 1s. poundage, and the shop-keeper allowed Waddilove a discount of 17½ per cent., and he guaranteed the payments to shopkeepers. Some years ago the Club was formed into a limited liability company styled The Provident Clothing and Supply Co., Ltd., head offices Bradford; Governing Director, J. Waddilove. Their turnover last year was some £800,000 to £900,000.

LONDON AND LANCASHIRE FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.

We have received the following statement, which points to a very unsatisfactory state of things in the Insurance world:—

> I read with much interest your remarks in the current number of John Bull *re* the treatment of their clerks by the London and Lancashire Fire Insurance Company. I notice you are assured that such treatment is not typical of other companies, but I can assure you that it is.
>
> Without going so far back as 1902, when the Alliance took over the Imperial and sacked nearly all the staff, take the more recent case of the Commercial Union Company, which has recently absorbed many of our best offices, and amongst them the old Accident Insurance Company of St. Swithin's Lane. I have it on good authority that practically the whole staff, with the exception of a few of the chief officials, have been discharged. Take my own case. I was for years with a life office which was absorbed some three or four years ago. I was assured by the absorbing office that my services in my present position would be permanently retained, but after being made a convenience of for about eighteen months, I was informed that it was their intention to abolish my department, but if I cared to remain with them another post would be found for me, but at only two-thirds my then salary.
>
> Fortunately I was offered a post by a company, as you will see a Colonial one, whose card I enclose, and I am bound to say that for fair dealing with their employees I have found them far more straightforward than any British company I have ever come in contact with.

"PROMISE AND PERFORMANCE."

The Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York and Its Promises to Policy Holders.

We quoted some figures last week showing the difference between the estimate of twenty years ago and the present-day settlement under a policy issued by the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York.

We also published a letter signed by the General Manager, Mr. J. H. Harrison-Hogge, giving the official excuses for the remarkable discrepancy shown between promise and performance.

It is interesting to note the further discrepancy between the statements that have to be rendered under our life assurance laws to the Board of Trade and the statements now made to a protesting policy holder:

Letter to Policy Holder, March 8th, 1908.	Board of Trade Returns, 1889. Mutual of New York Valuation.
"The difference in the figures now available is mainly due to the great fall in interest. Twenty years ago we were approximating something like 6 per cent. on our total funds."	"The average rate of interest upon the funds of the Company during the year 1888 was £5 5s. per cent."

We have received a copy of the pamphlet entitled "The Union Castle Mail Steamship Co., Ltd., or the Congo of the British Mercantile Marine, Donald Currie and Co., managers. Their remuneration frauds further exposed by an expert of thirty years' inside experience." This is not the first pamphlet bearing upon the same subject, and written by the same hand, that has come to us, and we can only repeat what we said on a previous occasion, that we are much surprised that the Union Castle Mail Steamship Co., Ltd., have taken no action in the Courts to prevent the further publication of the highly libellous statements with which the pamphlet teems.

With reference to our question last week as to whether the present position of Joseph Travers and Sons, Ltd., is not to some extent due to unwise speculation, it is only right that we

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

should give the reply of the chairman of the company. At the annual general meeting held on March 2nd, several shareholders complained of alleged unwise speculations. For instance, Mr. Richard said that the company had "speculated in beet sugar, and made reckless purchases of dry fruits, and had in that way lost thousands of pounds belonging to the shareholders," and Mr. Stevenson said "he firmly believed there had been too much speculation." To which the chairman, Mr. John Innes Rogers, replied, "they had not been speculating and had no intention of speculating, which in the produce markets meant absolute ruin to those who indulged in it." We, of course, accept Mr. Rogers' very explicit denial.

FINANCIAL ENQUIRIES.

VAAL RIVER GOLDFIELDS.—A. L. (London).—We cannot trace the payment of the dividend. Write to Mr. C. E. Hogg for an explanation. The company is registered in the Transvaal.

HEARTS OF OAK BUILDING SOCIETY.—CARRUCL (Chiswick).—Yes, it is a very sound society, in which you may invest your money without apprehension.

LONDON SCOTTISH STOCK EXCHANGE.—H. D. (Bath).—The answer is in the negative.

WARING AND GILLOW.—IGNORAMUS (Rhyl).—If the local man to whom you refer dealt with you as a principal, you can compel him to deliver, not otherwise.

BANK OF ENGLAND.—LIEBEL (South Hackney).—(1) The Bank of England would not be suitable for your purpose. (2) The General Accident, Fire and Life Assurance Corporation is a very progressive company. We cannot recommend the other you mention.

CO-PARTNERSHIP TENANTS, LIMITED.—S. E. R. (Manchester).—The answer is in the affirmative.

MELBOURNE TRAMWAY AND OMNIBUS COMPANY.—J. J. (Edinburgh).—Never mind the risks. Sell and take your profit, and be thankful.

W. WHITELEY'S DEBENTURES.—J. W. B. (Leeds).—We should be disposed to hold them for the present.

KAFFIR CONSOLS.—H. B. S.—Sell.

STOCK EXCHANGE AND BANKING COMPANY, LIMITED.—T. R. P. (Newport).—You would be extremely foolish to have dealings with this concern, and doubly foolish in sending them your savings in the expectation that they would so handle them as to be able to give you a comfortable annuity in years to come. This concern is a "dummy" company, registered in Guernsey by one Moraitini, who also used the alias of the Consolidated Securities Corporation. F. J. G. (Harrow).—Ditto.

INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT.—W. H. (Glasgow).—No.

ILFORD, LIMITED.—T. L. N. (Ilford).—We should be disposed to sell.

THE ROSE TUBE COMPANY.—HALESOWEN (Birmingham).—None, we think.

DOMINION OIL COMPANY.—J. W. B. (Sheffield).—The answer to your question is in the affirmative.

NATIONAL PENNY BANK.—ANXIOUS (Islington).—You need not be afraid. It is a sound institution.

BOXVORM OIL COMPANY.—E. A. W.—We should prefer another selection.

NEW ELIZA CONSOLS, LIMITED.—ELGIN (Southampton).—We should be content with your holding. Have nothing to do with the people you name.

A. J. WHITE, LIMITED.—A. R. M. (London).—We should be inclined to take the offer, and the same remark applies to the Ilford shares.

WATER AND GAS DEBENTURE SHARE INVESTMENT TRUST, LIMITED.—L. C. W. (Basingstoke).—The answer is in the negative. Throw the circulars of the outside broker to whom you refer into the fire.

THE ATLAS BANK.—H. R. S. (London).—We have nothing to add to what we have already said on this subject.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.—B. C. (Northampton).—We know nothing to the contrary.

PURCHASE OF SHARES.—A. T. (Bishop's Stortford).—If you wish to transfer your shares, you must fill up a transfer and forward it to the company with the certificate.

THE PREMIUM BOND TRUST.—C. B. (Leith).—Your friend would have lost nothing if he had followed his inclination and burnt the document.

SAFE INVESTMENT.—J. P. (St. Helens).—(1) We do not advise Consols, which, we think, will be lower by and bye. (2) We should prefer the Perpetual Building Society, of New Bridge Street, to the one you name. (3) Corporation stocks are, of course, first-class securities, and, if you are satisfied with the yield, there is nothing to say against them.

RUSSELL AND COMPANY, OF BLACKBURN.—H. W. (Holbeck).—We note what you say with respect to your experience with these people.

SAFE DEPOSIT.—C. A. F. A. (West Kirby).—We should be inclined to let it stop in the Post Office Savings Bank until it has grown a little larger, then write us again.

LONDON AND BRITISH STOCK AND SHARE CORPORATION.—A. B. (Chesterfield).—It is another blind-pool concern, with which you should have nothing to do.

MUTUAL PROPERTY INVESTMENT AND ACCIDENT COMPANY, LIMITED.—P. C. (Leicester).—We do not see your grievance. If you are not eligible for benefits until you have been a member of the company for three months, and you have not been a member for that time, where is the grievance?

UNITED STOCK AND SHARE CORPORATION.—C. A. C. (Cleckheaton).—Have nothing to do with it.

HUNGARIAN LOTTERY.—G. T.—We do not assist readers to lose their money in these lotteries.

ANGLO-ROUMANIAN PETROLEUM COMPANY, LIMITED.—SECRETARY.—We are much obliged to you for directing our attention to the error in our reply to "Marco (Canterbury)." We note that your company was only registered last year, the capital being subscribed privately, and that there have been no serious misunderstandings or, for that matter, any. As a matter of fact, the company is doing well. As you surmise, we were thinking of another company of somewhat similar name. We are obliged to you for the report of the statutory meeting.

R. A. SMITH AND COMPANY.—R. B. (Glasgow).—We are glad that you appraise these documents at their proper worth.

FAULKNER, FAULKNER AND COMPANY.—J. A. R. (Glasgow).—Better have nothing to do with these people and their options.

WEARDALE STEEL AND COAL COMPANY.—W. H. S. (Lincoln).—We see little likelihood of improvement in price just now. We thank you for your congratulations.

UNIVERSAL FINANCE AND EMPLOYERS' PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION.—T. A. (South Shields).—We know nothing against these people, but we should be slow in parting with sovereigns. S. M. (Newport).—Ditto.

ISSUING HOUSE OF LONDON, LIMITED.—J. M. (Muswell Hill).—We regret your experience, but you had better write off the amount as a bad debt.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER EXCHANGE.—J. V. (Leeds).—Better not. It would be throwing good money after bad.

PROVIDENT CLOTHING AND SUPPLY COMPANY.—W. A. L. (Croydon).—We are obliged to you for your letter, and note that you have dealt with this firm for the last three years to your complete satisfaction. BLACK DUKE (Manchester).—We are much obliged. You will see that we refer to the matter elsewhere. E. H. (Birmingham).—We are much obliged to you for your letter, and take note of what you say. J. J. (East Dulwich).—We thank you for your information. E. R. (Putney).—We thank you for your letter.

OUTSIDE BROKERS.—RELIABLE (Crewe).—No. 1 on your list has been in business many years, and we have never heard anything against it. A. R. (Sunderland).—Have nothing to do with any of them. FLUTTER (London).—Fluttering is apt to be an expensive pastime. If you take our advice, you will not play the game with the people you name. MRS. F. (South Terrace).—Have nothing to do with the people you mention or the shares they recommend.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITIES SYNDICATE.—T. M. (Rhondda).—We fear you have lost your money. ANXIOUS (Birmingham).—The policy is worthless.

LONDON AND PARIS EXCHANGE.—D. A. (Berwick).—We fear your money has gone. W. W. R. (Bow Shildon).—Ditto. ANXIOUS (Aberdeen).—We regret that we cannot help you in the matter.

SCRAGGY QUEEN CONSOLIDATING MINING COMPANY.—GOOSEGREEN (Huddersfield).—It is not a purchase we should recommend. We return the prospectus.

CAMPBELL, LAIRD AND COMPANY, LIMITED.—The present directors have had many difficulties to deal with, but they have faced the position manfully. Having regard to the certain requirements of the Government in the immediate future and also to the character of the present management, we advise you not to sell.

THE EXPLORING LAND AND MINERALS COMPANY.—A. L. F. (Ilford).—We have not heard that they have.

JOHN OUSELEY, LIMITED.—S. L. (Strand).—We have no information.

RELEASE OF OFFICIAL RECEIVER.—TEA DEALER.—It is the ordinary form of release, and explains itself.

STATUS OF BANK.—G. S. R. (Amherst Park).—We have heard the rumours to which you allude. But, so far as we can ascertain, there is no foundation for them. H. C. (Southampton).—We do not understand from your letter whether you want a deposit or a current account. All the leading joint stock banks are practically on the same level in the matter of security.

GENERAL MOTOR CAB COMPANY.—W. D. (Sanderstead).—We can only explain it upon the assumption that, in the opinion of the market, the company is not doing well.

DAY AND MARTIN, LIMITED.—M. F. (Bristol).—The report and accounts just issued show that the company did considerably better last year than in 1907, the profit amounting to £2,277 4s. 6d., as against £759 2s. 2d. in the preceding year, but the directors are not in a position to recommend a dividend, thinking it safer to carry forward the whole amount, together with that brought forward last year, amounting altogether to £6,808 6s. 9d. The report says that the directors "intend to use every effort to get the company's manufactures before the public," but it is to be feared that new processes have deposed Day and Martin from the position they once held.

FARROW'S BANK.—SHEN (Bristol).—(1) Yes, we think so. (2) We never advise speculative transactions with outside brokers. TONIC (Brixton).—The answer to your question is in the affirmative. A. K. (Streatham).—(1) Yes, we think so. (2) The Birkbeck Bank would answer your purpose.

SALISBURY BUILDINGS.—PLUMTREE (Western-on-Trent).—We should be inclined to hold.

PEN WYOMING COPPER COMPANY.—F. P. B. (Dawlish).—We advise you not to throw good money after bad. We have frequently advised our readers not to be misled by the puffs of the shares of this company which certain London newspapers, whose managers ought to have known better, have inserted in their columns. We have said time and again that the statements made in these puffs were not to be relied upon, and that people on this side would be extremely foolish to purchase any of the shares. We fear, however, that a large number have been disposed of in this country, largely owing to the statements of the newspapers to which we refer. Now comes reconstruction. "I beg to inform you," writes Mr. Harry Gullivar, London Secretary of the company, "that by a circular letter from Wyoming on the 12th February last, and signed 'Pen Wyoming Copper Company,' by resolution of its Board of Directors 'I am advised that the whole of the properties, rights, titles, and interests of the Pen Wyoming Copper Company were sold by contract on the 10th February to the United Smelters' Railway and Copper Company.'"

INSURANCE ENQUIRIES.

TWO INSURANCE COMPANIES.—R. W. (Norwich).—Both are of high standing.

PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION OF LONDON.—D. D. (Comtillery).—The company has been established some thirty years. G. E. (Hull).—The matter is entirely for you. If you take the surrender value, you must of necessity be a considerable loser.

BIRMINGHAM MUTUAL SICK AND LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.—H. B. (Pontypridd).—We know of nothing to the contrary.

THE NATIONAL MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY OF AUSTRALIA.—SAFETY (Manchester).—It is a company of high standing, and it would treat you liberally. We never recommend American insurance companies. What Socialism and the Little Navy have to do with insurance in English companies we do not know.

THE LEGAL AND COMMERCIAL INSURANCE COMPANY.—W. F. (Upper Norwood).—With reference to your question referred to in our issue of March 20th, we understand that the company's books will be closed at the end of March, and the report may be expected shortly afterwards. Our information is that the company is doing very well. It is certainly progressive, and, at the same time, if our information is correct, careful as to risks.

STATUS OF INSURANCE COMPANY.—S. C. (Walthamstow).—We cannot recommend it.

PEARL LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.—REXIP (Middlesbrough).—The company does an extensive life and industrial business.

THE IDEAL FRIENDLY SOCIETY.—G. J. McC. (Liverpool).—We have no reason to doubt it.

PRUDENTIAL INSURANCE COMPANY.—ONCE AND ONCE ONLY (Boscombe).—It is difficult, upon the imperfect evidence you send us, to form an opinion, but it seems pretty clear from your own admission that you failed to examine carefully the conditions of insurance at the time when you insured. This is a very common failure, but it does not relieve those who neglect a necessary precaution from the possible consequences of their carelessness.

UNITED FRIENDLY INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.—E. J. C. (Lower Edmonton).—We agree in thinking that the advantages promised are not likely to be fulfilled, having regard to the low subscription.

PROGRESSIVE INSURANCE COMPANY.—SUBSCRIBER (Stockton-on-Tees).—In the circumstances, we do not advise it.

THE PROVIDENT FREE HOME ASSURANCE COMPANY.—W. F. S. (Preston).—The standing of the company is good.

LAW UNION AND CROWN INSURANCE COMPANY.—M. B. C. (Manchester).—You have no occasion to be anxious.

CANADA LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.—W. B. W. (Leith).—Yes, it is a very sound company.

LIFE AND HEALTH COMPANY.—T. G. (Coventry).—We are inclined to agree with your friend. The British Crown Assurance Corporation was established in 1907, and appears to be making fair progress.

VALIDITY OF POLICY.—TWELVEBORE (Fulham).—We think not. We do not see where the insurable interest comes in, but, if exceptional circumstances enable you to prove it, you would be entitled to the money.

STATUS OF INSURANCE COMPANY.—DUNBAR (Wood Green).—We should prefer another selection.

STATE FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY OF LIVERPOOL.—ALPHA (Aberdeen).—The answer to your question is in the affirmative.

THE ISLANDS INSURANCE COMPANY.—M. B. (Cardiff).—We will get it for you.

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

AMONG THE LAWYERS.

COST OF CRIMINAL CASES.

Asked by Mr. Bottomley whether he would support the amendment of the Costs of Criminal Cases Act, 1908, so as to empower justices in all cases where a charge made against a person for any indictable offence is dismissed by them to order the prosecutor to pay the costs of such person incurred in or about his defence, the Attorney-General replied that he was not prepared to do so, on the ground that the "better course" is not to condemn in costs a prosecutor who has moved the Court in good faith and in the interests of public justice. Why should this be "the better course"? Granted that a prosecutor moves in good faith, it does not follow that the evidence in his possession justified his moving. It is no consolation to the man he moved against to be assured that he did so in "good faith." "Good faith" does not save the plaintiff in a civil action which fails from paying the costs of his opponent, and why should it absolve him in the much more serious matter of a criminal prosecution? As a matter of fact, it is a very rare occasion for a private individual to institute a criminal prosecution, and when he does so his case is pretty sure to be overwhelming.

In the vast majority of cases criminal prosecutions of importance are instituted by the Treasury. The Treasury may or may not act in good faith. We do not doubt that it always does, but the Treasury is advised by persons who certainly upon occasion act in anything but good faith in advising prosecutions. Why should the Treasury be absolved from paying the costs of the accused when the charge is dismissed? At best a man who has to face a Treasury prosecution is terribly handicapped. The limitless resources of the State are against him. And it takes a very strong magistrate to quash a Treasury prosecution. Enemies are made in quarters where friendship may be useful. If a Treasury prosecution fails we may be quite sure that it ought never to have been begun, that either there was bad faith or gross incompetence, or both, on the part of those who advised the Treasury and represented it. In these circumstances it seems to us to be but bare justice that the defendant shall be recouped his mere money loss by the payment of costs as between solicitor and client. In an ideal society he would have damages to boot.

PASS BOOKS AND CUSTOMERS.

In our issue of the 13th inst., we drew attention to a case where an attempt to constitute the rendering of a pass book as a settled account was satisfactorily established, although Lord Alverstone, in delivering his judgment, admitted that it was "a difficult point of law."

The matter is one of such great and general importance to the public that we feel no hesitation in again referring to it, with special reference to the masterly and lucid judgment just delivered by Mr. Justice Bray in the case of Kepitigalla Rubber Estates, Ltd., *v.* the National Bank of India, Ltd. The question in dispute was the liability for payment of a series of forged cheques, and one of the defences set up by the bank was that the pass book containing the earlier forgeries having been taken out and returned without objection, was a confirmation of them, and calculated to lead their cashier to pay further similar forgeries.

The actual fact was that the official of the company who had committed the forgeries went to the bank, obtained the pass book, took out the forged cheques, and then replaced the book in the box appointed for the purpose. Mr. Justice Bray had no difficulty in disposing of this line of defence, saying that he knew of no authority in this country for the proposition that when a pass book is taken out of the bank by the customer or some clerk of his and returned without objection, there is a settled account between the bank and the customer, by which both are bound. In referring to Lord Alverstone's judgment, which was directly contrary to the above, we said that we should not be surprised if, upon appeal, it were reversed.

Mr. Justice Bray evidently takes the same view of the matter. As we understand the bank has given notice of appeal, it will be interesting if this judgment should ultimately come before Lord Alverstone as a member of the Court of Appeal.

POLICE AND CIVIL CASES.

The manners and customs of unpaid magistrates and rural police are continually the subject of comment in this paper. A little time ago, in Herefordshire, a farmer, named Powell, claimed damages for injury done to lambs by a dog belonging to Mr. Linford, a barrister. The matter was, of course, a civil action under the Dogs Act, 1906. Powell, who had failed to convince Mr. Linford that there was any truth in his statements about the dog, went to the local police. In spite of the purely civil nature of the matter, the police inspector ordered a constable to make a domiciliary visit at Mr. Linford's private house. The policeman came in a very aggressive manner, and said that Powell was willing to meet Mr. Linford half-way. Mr. Linford, who did not admit that his dog did the damage, refused to settle, and told the policeman that he was exceeding his duty by coming on such an errand, which was that of a solicitor, and, also, that the matter had nothing to do with the police, as it was a case which, strictly speaking, should be tried in the County Court. The constable made various inquiries as to the dog's movements and what was known of them. Admissions thus obtained by the police were allowed by the Harewood Bench, consisting of Sir James Rankin, C. A. Cuthbert, W. G. Bankes, and H. L. Lutwyche, to be used in evidence. After expressing an opinion that the evidence of both sides was *bona-fide*—though both sides flatly contradicted each other in the essential parts of the case—the Bench found for the plaintiff as to four lambs, though plaintiff's own valuer testified that he had seen only two. The Chairman volunteered the opinion that matters of this kind should be dealt with by the County Court, which is in itself an admission of the incompetence of rural justices to deal with questions of tort. The point, however, is that in a purely civil matter the police were allowed to assist a plaintiff in the collection of evidence by making a domiciliary visit on the defendant before action brought. The Chief of the Herefordshire County Police is Captain the Hon. E. S. Stanhope, brother of the Earl of Chesterfield, and therefore he seems to be the person responsible for the Russian methods of his subordinates, which meet with the approval of the County magistrates, one of whom most improperly suggested, in reply to counsel's protest, that the constable was sent as an angel of peace.

LEGAL ANSWERS.

Newspaper Libel.—S. J. P. (Channel Fleet).—In strict law in a libel action an editor could be compelled to disclose the name of a contributor, but, by common custom and consent, he is rarely made to do so.

Interest on Legacy.—R. H. H. (Charlton).—Money on deposit at a banker's will bear a low rate of interest, according to the arrangement made with the banker, and we cannot tell you what you are entitled to, but it would be about £15.

Bequest of Mortgaged Property (Wigan).—All that the husband has to leave will be the equity of redemption, that is the right to pay off the mortgage and recover the legal interest in the property. He can leave this as a legacy to the wife, and unless the deeds are so framed as to make her liable to repay the sum borrowed, she would run no risk.

Mortgage Debt Recovery.—L. H. (Bath).—As executrix you would be liable for the debts on the houses to the extent of the other property, but not beyond, and as this is more than sufficient to repay the loans the estate would be liable. We would suggest that you should try and come to terms with the mortgagee's executors either to let the mortgage stand or to pay off the debt, as then you could wait a suitable opportunity to sell, and thus get back your money.

Bill of Sale.—J. J. (Essex).—The bill of sale is still in force, and you seem to be liable to proceedings for removing the security. If he recovers judgment for the debt he can garnishee your salary.

Nuisance (Monmouth).—A nuisance by noise is only subject to common law, and does not come under the control of the sanitary authority, and your best course is to threaten the builder with an action for an injunction. We fear, however, that if he could show that the noise was incident to the trade and was not excessive, you could not succeed. Try and compromise it with him.

Serving Drink After Hours.—S. (Reading).—Anyone may stay after hours to consume food and drink served to him before closing, but he may not be served with drink after closing.

Collection of Rents.—E. Jones (Dalston).—You should cancel the agent's authority to collect the rent, and collect it yourself or get someone else to do so. If you had a contract for the drains, the man may not exceed the amount agreed on, but if not he can charge you a reasonable sum for the work done as agreed, but he cannot charge you for what you did not order, unless it was a necessary consequence of the other work.

Making a Will.—J. C. (Stocksfield).—A will can be lawfully made by anyone, and there is no need to employ a solicitor to make it legal, but if the bequests are complicated, or the estate a large one, it is necessary to have a solicitor's advice so as to be sure that the testator does what he wishes to do. No stamp is necessary, and the only formality is that there must be two witnesses, who must be adults and who must both sign in the presence of the testator and of each other. A witness should be a person to whom no bequest is left, as he would not be able to take it. You can get will forms at most stationers. The I O U is no good.

Bankruptcy (Brighton).—The mortgagee being secured, can only prove for any sum unrealised by his security.

Recovery of Documents.—G. J. K. (Newport).—We do not seem to have received the letter you mention. We do not see what you can do beyond writing direct to his lordship. If the circumstances under which the documents were sent entitles you to their return, you could get a summons if the matter was in London.

Validity of Will (Horsley).—The omission of the day of the month does not invalidate the will, and no question could arise unless the testator died before the expiration of the month of June.

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK BOOMING. SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

CURING ILLNESS WITHOUT MEDICINE.

STRIKING SUCCESS.

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INVESTIGATION AND GUARANTEE OF THE SANDOW TREATMENT BY LEADING BRITISH INSURANCE COMPANY.

Public issue of Mr. Sandow's Book, without charge, explaining how sufferers may cure themselves of Weakness and Ill-health in their own Homes by a few minutes' simple, scientific Daily Exercise.

Probably the greatest sensation in the medical world of recent years is that which has to be announced to-day. The startling information consists of the fact that there is now declared to be a class of people who are actually healthier than what are known by Insurance doctors as "first-class lives."

The fact that a certain class of people are healthier than others in itself presents no very astonishing news, but when one learns that this class of ultra-vigorous and sound persons is composed entirely of men and women who a few months—in some cases even only a few weeks—earlier were classed amongst the weakly, delicate, and ailing, often the despair of their medical advisers and themselves, then the matter assumes a vital significance.

When in addition one learns, as the result of an exhaustive inquiry by responsible medical authorities, that the wonderful health change in these people has been brought about by what is the simplest and pleasantest of all forms of curing illness, without a single bottle of medicine, not one pill, no ascetic dieting, not one day's hindrance of the patient's ordinary occupation, then we realise that the importance of the announcement to all who are not at present blessed with good health is indeed great. The method of treatment which is now authoritatively proved to not only cure but make people "healthier than the healthy" is Curative Physical Culture.

There has been a great deal to direct attention in recent years to the subject of Curative Physical Culture, as made famous by the marvellously successful results achieved through its means by Mr. Eugen Sandow. The most eminent physicians and specialists have given it their cordial endorsement, and thousands of people, of all ages and in varying stages of physical weakness, have not concealed the gratitude they have felt for the benefits they have derived from the reading of his book and the adoption of Mr. Sandow's advice.

From the frontispiece of "Health from Physical Culture."

Mr. Eugen Sandow, whose important revised and enlarged booklet on Health from Physical Culture has just been issued. The only qualification for obtaining a copy freely is that the applicant shall state the nature of the complaint from which he or she suffers, when Mr. Sandow will forward a copy entirely at his own expense.

It is only a few months ago since there came the sensational investigation of the Sandow system of Curative Physical Culture by *Truth*, the most critical newspaper in the world, and the subsequent report established beyond cavil and question the proven efficacy of the Treatment, which effected complete cures in 94 out of every hundred cases undertaken, and materially benefited no less than 99 out of every hundred.

To this unique record of success yet another striking

Reproduced by permission from one of the many excellent photographs in Mr. Sandow's popular treatise.

The Waiting Room at 32a, St. James's Street, London, S.W., where Mr. Sandow carries on his successful and ever-increasing work, and where he can be consulted by invalids, personally or by letter, upon their complaints.

confirmation has been added. One of the foremost British Insurance Companies determined to institute an exhaustive medical investigation into the whole question of Mr. Sandow's claims and the achievements of his Physical Culture system, with a view to testing exactly what health benefit it produced in different illnesses. The points medically investigated were: Did Mr. Sandow's teaching definitely strengthen the weak, make perfect the physically defective, impart perfect Health? Did it, as well as curing the present illness, minimise the "risk" of future attacks and prolong vigorous life? Were the ailing public wise in writing to Mr. Sandow, as will be seen later he invites them to do, in order that he may send them copies of his book upon the cure of their troubles by the simple means of exercises which he has arranged for that purpose?

INDEPENDENT BUSINESS SCRUTINY OF RESULTS.

These were vital questions, and the severity of the test will be appreciated. The Century Insurance Company, one of the shrewdest and most prosperous of the great British insurance corporations, did not undertake the investigation from any motive of mere curiosity or from any philanthropic impulse. It was an important matter of business, and with business-like thoroughness and independence of their medical investigator went carefully and exhaustively into the principles, merits, and results of Mr. Sandow's system of Curative Physical Culture.

SANDOW'S FOLLOWERS "BETTER THAN FIRST-CLASS LIVES."

The result is set forth in the following letter:—

THE CENTURY INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED,
18, Charlotte Square,
Edinburgh.

Eugen Sandow, Esq.,
No. 32a, St. James's Street,
London, S.W.

Dear Sir,—The Directors of this Company have instructed me to inform you that the result of the investigation they

have caused to be made into the system of Physical Culture devised and superintended by yourself is so entirely satisfactory that they have decided, subject to the ordinary medical examination, in future to accept at rates substantially below the usual scale of charges patients whom you may recommend for life insurance or insurance against sickness at the end of a course of your treatment.

The reason these low rates can be quoted is that the Company are satisfied that the Sandow system brings the body into a strong and healthy condition above the average, thus tending to make for longer life and greater immunity from and recuperative powers in case of illness.

I am, yours truly,
HENRY BROWN, General Manager.

It is a striking triumph of Mr. Sandow's life work in making known the virtues of exercise as the best of all forms of treatment for a great many of the commonest and most trying illnesses. In the dispassionate businesslike judgment of a leading British Insurance Company, guided by the best medical advice, the person, however ill or weak to-day, who follows Mr. Sandow's advice becomes so constitutionally sound as to be better than a first-class life. That is to say, that Mr. Sandow's method not only cures illness in a marvellously short time, but so builds up the body, strengthens the physique, and establishes health that a man, woman, or child who has followed it can obtain a life insurance, or insurance against sickness, on terms more favourable than the lowest premiums obtainable for the best "first-class" lives.

That the benefit is permanent may be judged from the fact that the insurance company's reduction of premium continues for the whole of life because the erstwhile invalid remains healthier than the average.

From a Photograph. By permission.

Mr. Sandow attending to his day's correspondence from all parts of Great Britain, and even from invalids in foreign countries. He cordially invites all who suffer to write to him for his opinion.

As has been said, this extraordinarily convincing financial confirmation of the exercise cure is of the highest import to all ailing or delicate people, for it conveys to them not only a new hope, but much more, for it proves that if they will only follow Mr. Sandow's simple and pleasant method, as outlined in the book which he will send freely to every sufferer who writes describing the complaint suffered or nature of weakness, they have within reach a certain cure. His treatment is directed to individual cases, and having put his finger, so to speak, on the spot requiring attention, he concentrates the all-powerful forces of nature within the patient on that specific defect or weakness. The result of this particular mode of dealing with individual requirements in a specific way we have seen has been that in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred the sufferer has been materially benefited.

ILLNESSES SANDOW CURES BY PHYSICAL CULTURE.

The illnesses which Mr. Sandow claims to cure—and how his claims are substantiated from independent sources has been shown—are many and varied in nature, and are fully specified in the book which he offers to send to all who write to him about their cases.

Here we would only mention a few of the many physical imperfections which Mr. Sandow's Exercise Cure has overcome in practically every instance, such as :—

INDIGESTION IN ITS DIFFERENT FORMS, INCLUDING FLATULENCE AND ACIDITY.
CHEST WEAKNESSES.
NERVOUS AILMENTS.
PREVENTION OF INFLUENZA AND ITS SERIOUS AFTER EFFECTS.
BREAKDOWNS OF VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS.
PALPITATION.
WEAK HEART.
CONSTIPATION, BOWEL AND KIDNEY TROUBLES.
DEFORMITIES AND STIFF LIMBS.
PARALYSIS.

This list is, of course, merely an example of the value of scientific physical exercise in curing illness and remedying physical defects. Its potency is made manifest in Mr. Sandow's book, in which the sick and ailing are shown how health—not temporary improvement, but permanent and perfect health—can be derived from Physical Culture.

THE OBJECT OF THE ISSUE OF THE BOOK.

Mr. Sandow's object in presenting copies of this book to the public is pithily stated in his introduction : "My object is to lay before my readers a concise description of my system of applying physical culture as a cure in certain ailments and weaknesses which are most prevalent to-day, and to show how invalids and others may benefit by my personal direction of this curative means in their own cases."

This instructive book describes lucidly how Mr. Sandow has established an organisation by means of which he is not only able to deal personally with cases in all parts of the world, but also to make the adoption of his method of treatment as inexpensive as it has been proved to be effective.

The Sandow system of curing illness by means of curative exercises, although not a "cure-all," has been over and over again applied with every success to cases of the most serious character, in many of which a cure had been practically despaired of.

As Mr. Sandow says in his book: "The life of the body depends upon the movement that is continually going on within it, the destruction and repair of tissue, and the removal of waste matter from the system. Roughly speaking all diseases and illnesses are due to some interference with the smooth and regular working of these processes, and as the latter are entirely governed and directed by the muscular system of the body, it can readily be seen that physical exercises must play a very important part in the prevention and cure of disease.

Mr. Sandow's book explains in an interesting way how he applies his exercises in a scientific manner, each movement having a definite purpose. It shows how the circulation of the blood is controlled by the muscles, nerves, so that the virtue of scientific exercise is manifest.

AVAILABLE WHEREVER THE SUFFERER RESIDES.

The Sandow Cure is available to residents in all parts of the country, and even abroad. Reference has frequently been made to the organization which Mr. Sandow has perfected and whereby he can from particulars which you write to him, study your case, and prescribe exercises specifically for you.

It has been shown shown how a leading British Insurance Company guarantees the success of the Sandow Treatment, and how *Truth* has testified to its efficacy in 99 out of every 100 cases undertaken.

The greatest monument of the Sandow Treatment is, and always will be, what may be termed its living record. It is found in the innumerable lives it has built up, in health restored, in vigour imparted into weak frames, in the definite proof it has furnished that Physical Perfection is an ideal that is to be actually attained by men and women, whatever may be their present health, condition, or age. Age is no criterion of health. A man or woman is as old as he or she feels, and Mr. Sandow's book is convincing proof that whatever the age of a man or woman may be, health, with the benefits that accrue to it, is the perquisite of a lifetime.

Mr. Sandow does not ask ailing people to try some speculative or uncertain remedy. He invites every man or woman not in perfect health to write to him fully, or to call and see him, when he will give the same careful advice which has led to such wonderful results for so many others who were, before communicating with him, amongst the weakest of the weak, and who are now, as a result of their wisdom in looking fully into the matter, the healthiest among the healthy. The address for communications, personal or by letter, mentioning having seen this offer in JOHN BULL, is : Eugen Sandow, 32a, St. James's Street, London, S.W.

MINISTERS AND INFORMATION.

A good deal has been said recently in other parts of this journal about the lack of information disclosed by members of the Government. Here is another illustration. Questioned the other day as to whether his attention had been called to the question of a company known as the National Benefit Trust, the Attorney-General replied :—

> I have made enquiries, and I have not been able to ascertain anything about the Trust. Perhaps the hon. Member will kindly give me such information as he possesses as to its whereabouts, and I will endeavour to verify the facts suggested by the question.

Was there ever a more amazing admission of faulty intelligence? It is not to be supposed that the Attorney-General, with his many responsibilities, should have acquaintance with the existence of every company that appeals to the public for support. But the National Benefit Trust is a limited company with an authorised capital of £120,000. When asked about it, it was open for the Attorney-General to say that he knew nothing about it, or that he did not care to say anything about it, and it was not within his province to enquire unless for a better reason than his questioner had disclosed. But the Attorney-General does not answer in any one of these ways. He admits by implication that the question is a proper one, and that he is quite willing to answer it but that he has failed, after making enquiries, to "ascertain anything about the Trust." Of course nobody supposes that the Attorney-General will make personal enquiries in a matter of this kind. But where is his staff? He is like the centurion of whom we read in Holy Writ. He tells one man to go there and another elsewhere, and they go, but apparently they do not go far. For an Attorney-General to see nothing incongruous in his reply that he can find no information respecting a joint-stock company registered at Somerset House is strange indeed.

THE MANCHESTER "MEN'S HOME AND SHELTER."

PAYING GUESTS OR DEPENDENTS.

The following letter from a Manchester reader appears to call for a reply :—

As quite a number of people in Manchester and elsewhere have got a fixed idea into their heads that all the men who live in the Men's Home and Shelter, at 24, Hood Street, which belongs to the Central Hall Mission, are fed, clothed, and sheltered at the Mission's expense, let me humbly contradict that erroneous idea.

Anyone living at the Home can get a bed and something to eat, as he could at an hotel—that is, by paying for that bed, and for that something to eat; but not otherwise.

No one can grumble at this; but when one pays, and pays as much as elsewhere, one does not care to be labelled as a sort of dependent semi-pauper as well—a sort of beggar, dependent on charity.

I don't know why the public should have got this false idea into their heads, unless it be that they have misinterpreted the "Statement and Appeal" issued yearly by the Central Hall people. Certainly we read there a wonderful story. The special appeal that I have before me is for £5,000. And amongst a number of other glowing things we read :—"By the efforts of its voluntary workers in meetings, visitation, personal service, &c., over 40,000 people are reached every week." We read of "the rescue, relief, and preventive work of the mission." We read that "the doors are always open, and the needy, the degraded, the sorrow-stricken, come every hour of the day, and often through the night, seeking guidance and help." We read, "The number of those who thus sought us last year, and who were registered on our books as interviewed and helped, exceeded 41,000." And, more important to my present letter and subject, we read that: "During the year our homes and shelters have provided over 138,700 beds and 416,100 meals for the poor and destitute." We further read that "Every Sunday food is provided for the poor and destitute." "During the past year" we are told that "27,986 availed themselves of this provision."

If that "Statement and Appeal" is made often, I can forgive the public for getting a certain impression on their minds. But in spite of its flowery and convincing language I still assert that if you have sixpence you may get a bed at Hood Street, and if you have another sixpence then on a Sunday a dinner is provided for you. But no money, no bed; no sixpence, no dinner, whether "poor or destitute" or not.

As I said, no one grumbles at this. But, after all is said, might not the above statements mislead a man of only ordinary intelligence, as are most of us? And might they not cause many an one to write out a cheque with the thought that he or she is charitising people who are really paying their own way, and paying it well?

LUNACY SCANDALS.

We have received the following letter :—

> I have just read the letter in this week's issue under the head of "Asylum Scandals," with keen interest, indignation and sympathy, for I am in a position to confirm in every way this scandalous state of affairs and glaring injustice, that would not now be tolerated in America even for twenty-four hours, owing to their amended Lunacy Laws. Living graves indeed they are! Any help I can give in my humble way is entirely at your disposal. I enclose my card.
>
> A Well-Known Surgeon Who Has Survived.

TRADE NOTES.

Five Hundred Silver-Mounted Calabash Pipes Free.—Readers of John Bull sending 5s. to Sadler and Moore, Spital Square, Bishopsgate, London, for a half-pound tin of "Service Mixture" will receive, in addition to the tobacco, a silver-mounted calabash briar pipe, free. The proprietors of "Service Mixture" wish to make it quite clear that the price has not been advanced for the purpose—this tobacco has always been retailed at 10s. per pound tin, 5s. per half-pound, and proportionately for smaller quantities.

Quadrant Cycle Co.'s Correct Address.—We are requested to state that all letters sent in reply to advertisements published in this journal by the Quadrant Cycle Co., Ltd., should be addressed in full to Foleshill Road, Coventry, as letters which do not contain the words "Foleshill Road" are sometimes undelivered. Any reader who has not received a reply should send a copy of his letter enclosed in an envelope addressed to The Quadrant Cycle Company, Ltd., Foleshill Road, Coventry.

Readers of John Bull should not fail to take advantage of the offer made by Messrs. Grossmith and Son, Newgate Street, London, in their advertisement appearing on page 401.

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Smart Dark Grey Rubbered

WATERPROOF COAT,

ventilated, 36 inches long, fashionable wide skirt (90 inches, WEIGHS ONLY 20 ozs.), 7/6, actually worth more than double. 39 inches long, 8/9; 42 inches long, 9/11. It is the Ideal Coat for Cycling, Golfing, Shooting, Touring, Riding, Boating, Fishing, or Walking, and will wear for years.

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THE DRAMA OF TO-DAY.

By M. Clement Scott.

Things are really abominably dull in the theatrical world, and I simply long for the good old days to come again when plays were either decided failures or emphatic successes. I hate these half and half sort of affairs. No theatre at this moment can exactly be accused of jerking the people into a failure, nor "shoo"-ing them away from an "emphatic success."

In fact, with the exception of "Strife," "Henri of Navarre," "What Every Woman Knows," "The Flag Lieutenant," and "The Follies," there is a painfully meagre fare for the starving playgoers to feed upon in the great Metropolis.

Perhaps I shall be reprimanded for not mentioning "An Englishman's Home," but seriously—can this entertainment, from an artistic point of view, be placed among the genuine successes? I am afraid not. I should be inclined to call it merely *succès d'occasion*.

Nothing has been produced outside the ordinary, for time untold, and the public was delighted to grasp at the first thing that came along. Furthermore, Major du Maurier's work had everything in its favour—it was produced at the right moment, and in a country where the spirit of patriotism is not yet dead—and "The Englishman's Home" has had the advantage of being very cleverly boomed. But its artistic merit may be judged by the ice-bound reception it received when it was presented a few days ago in America.

And from the few things I have mentioned, there is only one remarkably powerful, brilliant, and strong piece of original work. I allude, of course, to John Galsworthy's wonderfully realistic drama, "Strife," and all true lovers of theatrical art must murmur from the bottom of their hearts, "Thank you, John Galsworthy, you have given us a play of vital interest, superbly written around a human and wholesome subject. And what is more, 'Strife' is acted in a manner, the equal of which is not to be found in any other London theatre.

"The Noble Spaniard."

Charles Hawtrey has started off merrily at his dainty little drawing-room theatre in Dean Street, Soho, and has had to add more rows to his stall accommodation, for all society is flocking to see their beloved Charles as The Noble Spaniard, and to take note of the wonderful costumes of the period worn by our great ancestors in the year of grace 1850. By the way, though, dear Mr. Somerset Maugham, 1850 is, if I mistake not, a little too premature for the days of crinolines, which were only donned in France in 1853 by the Empress Eugénie, who ruled the fashion in those naughty Empire days to such an extent that had she suddenly developed a fancy for imitating the lightly-attired Indian ladies, and appeared in a few beads, or elected to wear a sporran and a smile, she would have been religiously followed in the like attire by her never-ending crowd of female admirers.

There is plenty of fun to be got out of "The Noble Spaniard" if only the English people would take the tip from their foreign brothers and sisters and act at the same fever heat pace that the French people revel in doing in these amusing farces—for, by the way, "The Noble Spaniard" is but an adaptation from one of Grenet-Dancourt's comical pieces—but the slightest halt—hesitation—waiting for cues—or uncertainty, is fatal to works of this description.

The French artists don't give you a moment's breathing time—they rush along at such a mad break-neck speed that they frequently bring an indifferent farce to a successful climax.

Nothing funnier has been seen on the stage for a long time than the scene in "The Noble Spaniard" in which the husband accuses his innocent middle-aged wife of infidelity and a disgraceful intrigue. Fanny Brough is exactly the type of actress required for Lady Proudfoot; she is positively tremendous in the part, and the audience shouts itself hoarse at her extraordinary skill and indescribably funny conception of the injured lady, who longs all the time for it to be really a fact, and that some lovesick swain were in truth eating his heart out for her sake. It is worth a visit to the Royalty Theatre if only to see Fanny Brough as Lady Proudfoot and Charles Hawtrey as the passionate, adoring, handsome Noble Spaniard, the Duke of Hermanos, whose birth is so noble that he "'ave de right to keep 'is 'at on in de presence of de King."

I hear that Mrs. Patrick Campbell has been offered the part of La Femme X in this French play recently acted in Paris by Jane Hading, and which has been adapted for the English stage—luckily with the final act deleted—by John Raphael, the Gay City Gossipmonger, who writes in our one and only *Referee*.

The heroine in Bisson's melodrama—it seems strange to talk of Bisson writing a melodrama, doesn't it?—he who has been all his life associated with the very lightest and brightest of French comedies—is one of those powerful and emotional characters that requires to be acted for all it is worth—you can't attack such a part in kid gloves, or it will go for nothing.

Olga Nethersole, as she was in the days of Isaac Henderson's Agatha, would have been an ideal Femme X—Winifred Emery would make the people sob with it—Evelyn Millard would be admirably suited to the part—but I doubt much if Mrs. Patrick Campbell, who is essentially one of the *drama à thèse* school, is quite a wise selection for a modern melodramatic character of the Femme X pattern. But we shall see.

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JOHN BULL'S WOMENFOLK.

By Mrs. Bull.

"Behold! I Am Already Appropriated."

It is decidely refreshing to come across a brand new idea, and certainly some ladies of Illinois have discovered that rare bird. They have decided that a married man ought to be duly ticketed as "not in the market," not only by a wedding ring, but by a distinctive title, just as married women drop "Miss" and become "Mrs." Their Senator so far agrees that he is willing to introduce a Bill into the United States Senate, if only the ladies can suggest a suitable new designation. It certainly is a difficulty—Mrs. Bull's unaided genius can evolve no brilliant idea—perhaps a prize offered in a paper might produce some really smart idea. I suppose it would be the duty of we women to make the prefix of the bachelor something of a disgrace; as in ancient Sparta the men who refused to thus do their duty were once a year marched round a public altar and made to sing songs of scorn against themselves, while all the women struck and hissed them as they passed. What other benefit do the ladies expect to result from the idea? In a man's own neighbourhood everyone knows when he wears the chains of matrimony, and once away from home, a bold, bad sinner would merely have to hide his wedding ring and resume his bachelor title, should he wish to resume bachelor ways.

It is but a comparatively recent notion that marriage alone shall change a woman from "Miss" to "Mrs." In the Elizabethan, the Stuart, and the Georgian eras, a lady of dignified years was always called Mrs.—pronounced Mistress—even though she had no husband. The young lady whose friendship meant so much to poor Alexander Pope is "Mrs." Martha Blount throughout all his letters, yet she was a spinster. Thus Mrs. Alison Cockburn—the lady who declared marriage to be a very good scheme for everybody but herself—and Mrs. Hannah More, the poetess, both died old maids. After all, it seems rather absurd that dignified elderly women should be called "Miss" like any little schoolgirl. Now a small boy is only "Master" till about his teens, when he becomes "Mr." as a matter of course. It is different in France, however, where a small toddling boy is as much "Monsieur" as his grandpapa.

Wherein Lies Kindness.

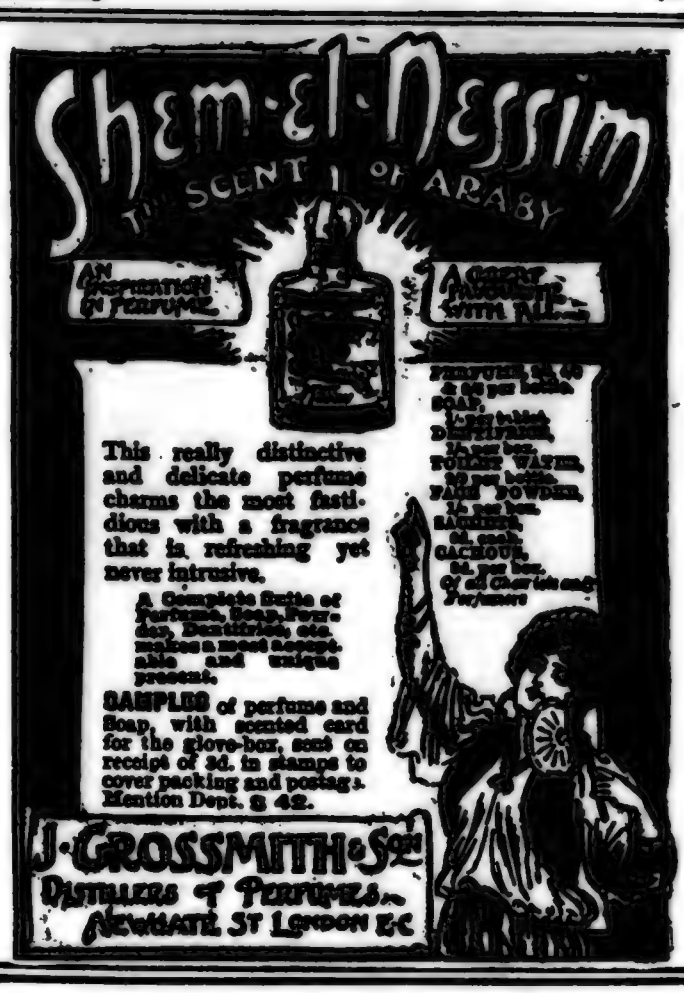
One of those difficult problems that recur now and then, is whether it is justifiable to take human life in cases where it appears obviously the kindest course. Such an instance became public the other day, when a labourer's wife endeavoured to get compensation from the owner of a parrot that had flown viciously at her, with the result that her baby was born with claws in place of hands, and a head so mis-shapen to the form of a bird's, that the child would almost certainly grow up imbecile. To have allowed this poor little wretch to start forth upon perhaps a long life must seem doubtful morality, yet, of course, it is upheld by the ethics of the present day. But in their hearts many people agree with Napoleon's sentiments in a crisis of this sort. In his case the choice was between painlessly poisoning his wounded, or leaving them to the tender mercies of the Turks. The army doctor declined to follow the first alternative, so Napoleon did not insist, but merely remarked that he had but asked for his poor soldiers what he would have desired for himself.

But in the case of animals, the question seems more simple. If year after year they are to be gaily vivisected in their thousands on the ground that sentient creatures without souls are as mere dirt where the possible interests of immortal man are concerned, surely the *coup-de-grâce* should be dealt with corresponding readiness when it seems the truest kindness. It does not bring up pleasant visions to learn that Crossmolina, co. Mayo, is gaining a reputation for amateur veterinary surgery—that people whose only qualifications are "deft hands, indomitable courage and kindly sentiment," are trying healing experiments where higher authorities have declared that nothing can be done. Neither does it bespeak the highest affection on the part of the owner of the little fox-terrier terribly maimed by a reaping machine, who would not consent to his death, but preferred to provide him with home-made cork legs, so that we are proudly told that if the little cripple is lying quiet and if anyone calls "cats," he jumps up yelling distractedly to have his legs strapped on!

Cheese Biscuits.

Take twelve milk biscuits and two ounces of grated cheese—l'arnesan for preference—one ounce of butter, a little cayenne and some mustard. Put cheese and butter into a soup plate and mix thoroughly with the back of a knife, adding by degrees a good deal of mustard and a very little cayenne. Spread this paste thickly over the biscuits, and pop them into the oven for five minutes or a little longer. Dish up on a napkin and serve on hot plates. It must be remembered that whenever cooked cheese is in question it is of the utmost importance to serve it really hot—it is ruined by being in the least degree lukewarm.

Readers of John Bull should not fail to take advantage of the offer made by Messrs. Grossmith and Son, Newgate Street London, in their advertisement appearing on this page.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BULL'S EYES.

Notes of Interrogation:—
Isn't the Premier getting a bit seasick?
Does "haul down" mean "all up" with Lord Chas. Beresford?
Why not call it New Zeal-land now?
Has the Admiralty an "Intelligence" Department?
Will Sir John Fisher face the storm with resignation?
Did the Liverpool carters strike to draw attention to their "whoa's"?
Is the Trades Boards Bill a Free Trade Measure?
Will a penny off the rates make the City pennyless?
Does the "cab pirate" make a hansom thing of it?
Will Sir A. Conan Doyle call his son "Sherlock"?
Are orders for ships, given on the Spree, really executed on the Sly?
Is "The Comet" light literature?
Will Prince George of Servia, having given up his "rights," now ventilate his "wrongs"?

At the London Sessions, a man sentenced to 12 months' said he did it to get things quick, in order to marry. He'll have plenty of "time" now.

Mr. Seymour Hicks is to play Miss Hilaline Terriss's part at matinees of "The Dashing Little Duke." Only just that a husband should take his wife's part.

There is a lot of difference between the man who is good-for-nothing and the man who is good, for nothing.

"Underground," the title of a recent book, suggests that the author has been doing spade work at his diggings.

"A barrister is a man who wears neither moustache nor beard," says Dr. Emil Reich. Bar-faced, in fact.

"Public Money Wasted," reads an *Express* headline. And they call it a newspaper!

"A little patch goes a long way," says the *Lady's Pictorial*. Perhaps that is why it is usually behind?

Sir Robert Giffen suggests that a Territorial soldier should have two votes. We agree, on condition that he be compelled to give one to either side.

Most of us, according to *Health*, have a screw loose somewhere. The trouble with the unemployed is that they can't find theirs.

Mrs. Crummey, a Suffragist, has found Holloway so agreeable that she would not mind going there again. So Crummey is not crusty.

A Rubber Heel advertisement says "you can screw them on yourself." Thanks, we prefer them on our boots.

Snake skins are being tanned for women's belts in Madras. Suitable material, since the serpent has always got round a woman.

"Girls growing taller," a contemporary informs us. We should have been more surprised if they had been growing shorter.

The War Office, says Mr. Haldane, is not a bed of roses. Some of the minor officials complain that it is not a bed of "rises" either.

The heading, "Glasgow Tragedy," in the *Star*, has no connection with the recent election in that city.

A report of a "Romantic Love Match" states that the gentleman met the lady's parents, who "approved of his suit." Doubtless he wore his best.

"England Growing Sober," reads a heading. We must stop alluding to our "tight little island."

Several large cocoa firms have decided not to buy from San Thome and Principe, owing to the condition of labour there. Grateful and comforting.

"If you do not do your work properly, you cannot play properly," says Walter Bevan. Not even the fool?

The Rev. R. J. Campbell wants to know "just how he stands." Apparently he doesn't know whether he is on his head or his heels.

The first performance of "Hamlet" at the Lyceum was much marred by coughing among the audience. Yet the play seemed to go down very well.

A horse named Judas won a race recently. Was it a Selling Stakes?

"Bomb in a Book," we read. Evidently a shocking publication.

"Under Babylonian laws, in the case of certain unsuccessful operations, the doctor lost his hands, we are told. Nowadays, the operator merely loses his head.

"War of Atoms," reads a headline. Mighty atoms, of course.

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JOHN BULL'S LETTER BAG.

[The Editor *replies to, and has a chat with, some of his numerous correspondents.*]

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Will readers, when sending cuttings from newspapers, take care that in each case a sufficient portion is sent to identify the name of the paper and the date of issue?

CORRESPONDENTS, when referring to previous communications which they may have addressed to us, should always mention the nature of the matter therein referred to—such as whether it related to a legal, financial, insurance, publishing, or general enquiry.

Special Notice.—*Owing to the great increase in the number of* enquiries *received, consequent upon the abnormal growth in our circulation, it is no longer possible to answer them all in "Letter Bag." The Editor will, however, in special cases, endeavour to reply by post to those correspondents who forward a stamped addressed envelope. When answers already standing in type have been published,* only those of general interest *will appear. The Editor will, of course, still be grateful for information, "biscuit" material, newspaper cuttings, etc., which will be duly acknowledged in these columns.*

AUTHORS and artists submitting MSS. and drawings for consideration must write names and addresses upon the back of their work. The Editor can accept no responsibility for the safe custody of MSS., etc., so forwarded, but will endeavour to return unaccepted work **when stamps have been enclosed in payment of postage.**

The scores of readers who have written us in reference to the sad case of the young man afflicted with *pemphigus* are cordially thanked for their letters—which have been forwarded to the father of the sufferer. We are sorry and astonished to learn that so dreadful and obscure a disease is so prevalent.

R. H. (Aberdeen) suggests hat our Editor should issue a set of picture postcards, with an autograph portrait of himself, and charge for them—the proceeds to go to the Rex v. Bottomley Defence Fund. But purchasers of "Bottomley's Book" will get the portrait and autograph for nothing.

Mr. Norris (of Overthorpe, Penarth) sends us a long statement of great hardships inflicted upon him by apparently unjustifiable prosecutions, and complains of misstatements by the Attorney-General in Parliament regarding the matter. From a perusal of the correspondence, Mr. Norris appears to have a substantial grievance, but we regret that space does not permit of our dealing with the matter more fully.

J. E. (Walthamstow).—We are quite unable to send you a copy of the daily paper containing the offer of a reward to anyone "who could prove that Jesus Christ was ever on earth."

"Budget" (Newcastle).—We do not think the House of Lords has ever rejected the Finance Bill.

L. C. B. (Willesden Green).—There is a difference between a book and a regular weekly journal.

A. E. G. (Handsworth).—We hope you will win your bet. Thanks for congratulations.

"Sudbury" (Sidcup).—"Bankruptcy" is a colloquial term, but it does not strictly apply to a Receiving Order unless it is followed by adjudication nor, of course, to an arrangement with creditors.

J. P. G. (Bootle).—What on earth is the matter with you, and are you really our loving brother?

T. W. N. (Birkenhead) and Others.—Mr. Manson's book, "The Salvation Army and the Public," is published by Messrs. Routledge in two editions, at 6d. and 6s.

J. S. D. (Dublin).—We understand the paper referred to has suspended publication, and we are afraid there is not much prospect of your obtaining a refund of your subscription.

"Right" (Tottenham) suggests that John Bull readers should club together and present the nation with a *Dreadnought*—to be called "Vox Populi." We shall be happy to subscribe a million, if our readers will find the rest.

F. H. (Leicester).—If what you say about the hours and conditions of labour at Cohen's Penny Bazaar is true, it is time the townspeople asked questions.

"A Reader" complains that when having supper at Gatti's Adelaide Gallery the other night, and having ordered a bottle of White Horse Whisky, which was priced on the list at 6s., he was charged 9s., the explanation being that the addition was always made when spirits were sold by the bottle. He thinks that considering this whisky is retailed at 4s. and listed at 6s., he has been badly treated. What say Messrs. Gatti?

"Amused" (Aldershot).—No more poetry, please.

W. S. (Bradford).—We really do not appreciate your point.

Rufus (Tooting).—No "Biscuits" for obvious misprints.

W. P. U. (Finchley).—If you object to candles, for heaven's sake burn rush-lights. But please don't write us gibberish about "moral and mental retrogression" in that connection. Eat a bit of coke during Lent for your stomach's sake.

"Satirical Knave" (Birmingham) sings:—

We know that Jim will rally round the flag,
And, of course, we know our happy homes he'll guard.
For a skirmish he's a liking, and when it comes to fighting,
His blows can be dreffel swift, and hard.

F. S. (Westminster) says he once took four Birmingham people to hear the Queen's Hall orchestra, and the only result was that he had to pay for their brandy, and they told him they had quite as good music at home. His summary is "D—— liars!" Oh!

"Steve" says it cheers him up to write nonsense sometimes. And it cheers us up to receive it.

"Anti-Suffragette" writes: "My Dear Dearest Jim, I have always liked you, but since you have attacked those fearful Birmingham people, I am simply in love with you, and am only sorry you are not a Bachelor. Yours devotedly." Jim hastens to turn the other cheek.

H. E. S. (Harringay).—The fullest report of the Editor's Guildhall speech is that contained in "Bottomley's Book." It is practically verbatim, the parts omitted being mainly uninteresting and lengthy documents which were read in the course of its delivery.

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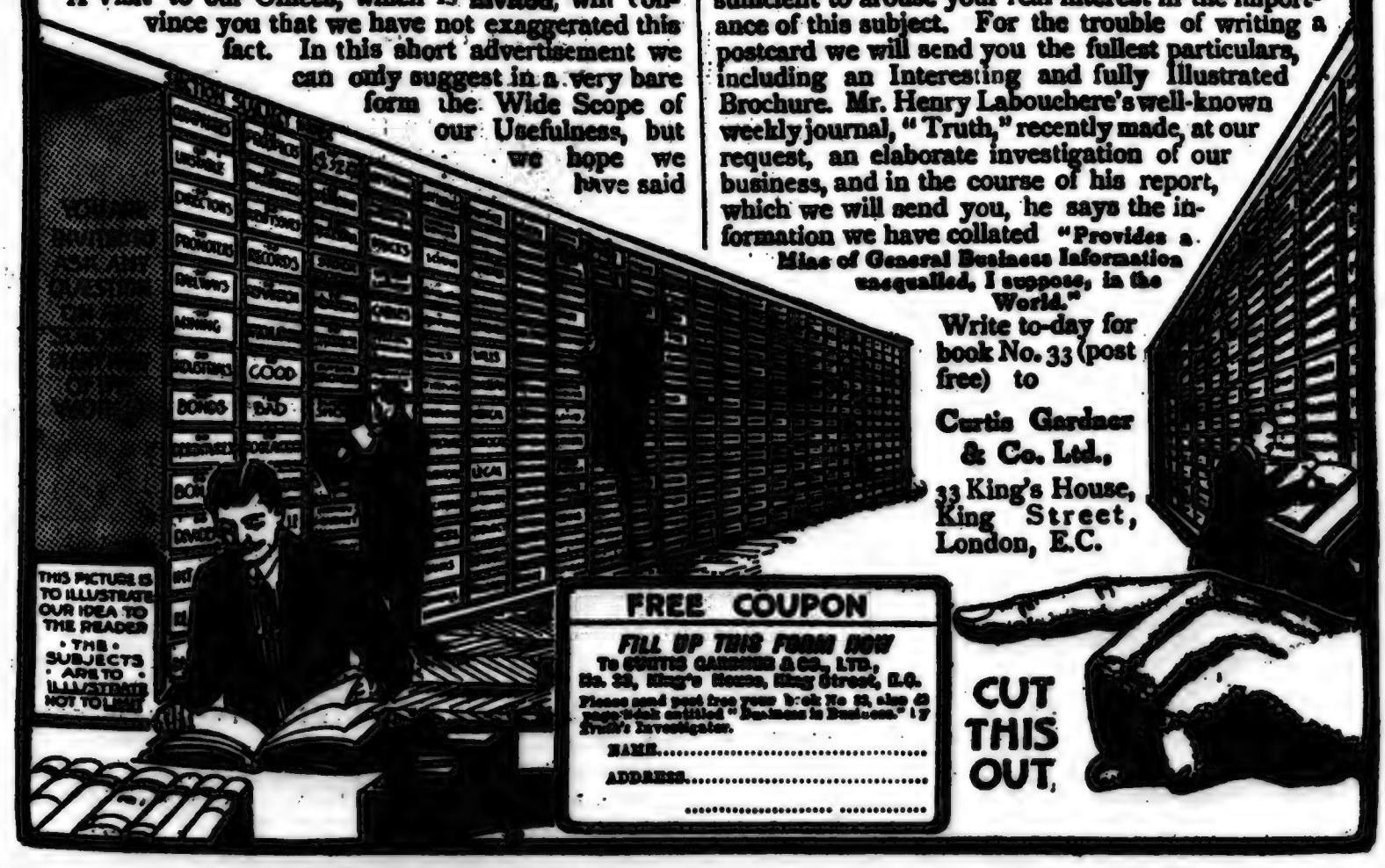

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R. R. (Neath) answers S. R. O. (Llanelly): "My dear sir,—I address you thus, because I conclude by your absurd remarks you are a mere man (women would have more commonsense than to lay themselves open to ludicrous criticism). May I trouble you to look at home, in the hovel in which you reside, and take notice of the absolutely unintelligible dialect before passing scathing remarks (meant to be amusing, but hopelessly feeble) about a city which I wonder you have the audacity to even attempt to compare with a village practically unknown to civilisation." Hoity-toity!

G. J. F. (Streatham) agrees with our remarks about Sir A. de Rutzen, and wants to open a subscription list with 2s. 6d. "to fight" him. But we have no *locus standi*. He thinks "such old flannel-footed idiots as Willis" ought not to be allowed on the Bench. More contempt.

J. B. (London, S.W.) writes: "Everybody is with you with regard to the money subscribed for poor Tyler's widow. It seems inconceivable that the Fund can be appropriated in this high-handed way without consulting her. It was given by the public for her and her alone, and it is nothing less than thieving for anyone else to appropriate it. De Rutzen should be prosecuted for misappropriation of the Fund." But the Public Prosecutor is very tired just now.

F. D. (New York City) says: "Any country that permits the Chinese to settle and carry on business, is laying itself open to ruin from a business point of view. I myself was arrested, but discharged, after trial, for shooting a Chinaman whom I caught in the act of assaulting a young coloured girl of about ten years of age." Why not have called a policeman?

"Face the Facts" (The Curragh) objects to the use of the word Conscription except in the case when lots are drawn. Referring to Monsieur du Maurier's play, he points out that "it was agreed at the Geneva Convention that citizens, rising to resist invasion, are not to be shot for fighting in civilian garb during the first few days of a war." So Froggy did not get his facts right.

"Janus" (Cricklewood).—You will be had up for libel if you charge people with crime in this reckless way. If people like to see the heroine of the latest sensation, why interfere with their whim?

"Taylor" says the Income Tax people invited him to take a journey costing £1 11s., and waste a whole day to appear before Commissioners and claim a rebate of £1 13s. 9d. They have cheek enough for anything.

A. G. (Lloyd Street).—Don't be sanctimonious.

"Adsum" (Kentish Town Road).—If the doctor had taken the trouble to see what was the matter with the patient, he might have had some excuse for refusing to listen. But the brute had not even elementary manners, according to our informant.

Messrs. Russell and Co., Christmas card publishers, of Blackburn, write us in reference to our recent criticism of a letter they addressed to a lady who had taken up an agency for their cards. They say that the letter was written by a clerk, whose zeal outran his discretion, and that the omission of the prefix "Miss" to her name was entirely an accident. They send up documents showing that they received four orders at intervals from her, and state that no settlement was made according to the agreement signed; they could get no reply to requests for payment and had great difficulty in discovering her new address, she having moved. They point to the receipt of the four orders as proof of the quality of the cards, and further send testimonials from other people—indeed, some of our own readers have written informing us that they have had satisfactory business relations with the firm.

W. H. (Wimbledon).—There is no difference in the contents of the shilling and half-crown editions of "Bottomley's Book," but the more expensive is printed on toned paper, and is, of course, bound in cloth.

"An Admirer" (Barnsbury).—We have many times warned our readers against Gerrard and all his (stencil) works. We are afraid you must have "ardently admired" our paper without reading it very attentively.

"John Bullite" (Stepney) writes that she has taken two sixpenny packets of tea from the Sunville Tea Co., of Manor Park, for twelve months, and expected an award of "£2 salary for advertising the goods," in accordance with the Company's circular, but has received nothing. She should have read our criticism of this scheme in a recent issue. Of course, only a few people a week get the money, although hundreds may be qualified. Doubtless 52 "sixpenny packets" (no weight stated) leaves plenty of margin for profit, even after deducting £1.

J. B. (Battersea) wants an assisted passage to New Zealand. We think his best course is to communicate with the Emigrants' Information Office, 31, Broadway, Westminster, London.

C. H. (Tunbridge Wells) would like the experiences of other readers regarding Buckenham's Employment Agency, 7, Whitefriars Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

"Able Seaman" writes confirming our views of Roberts's offer to put the unemployed in the way of obtaining berths on board ship for a shilling, and says that the circular we criticised was recently the cause of much healthy amusement on board his vessel. He says that the form of circular was invented by a man recently convicted, who hailed from Clapham—probably Paynter—and was dropped by him on hearing of the prosecution of a man named Williams, another exponent of the dodge.

(We regret we are obliged to hold over a large number of replies.)

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RACING NOTES.

By W. Lotinga.
("Larry Lynx" of "The People," and "Magpie" of "The Globe.")

The features and sensations of the opening week have long ago been discussed *ad nauseam*. The one outstanding fact that will ever be memorable was the extraordinary series of records attaching to the Grand National, which merely promised to be very ordinary. Few of the present generation have ever seen so many runners or such a big percentage "get" the country. None will, I believe, ever again look upon such a kaleidoscopic last half-mile nor a more brilliant performance such as stand to the credit of the five-year-old, the French bred Lutteur III.

Less than a mile from home he was a furlong behind and apparently not in the race—in fact, he never had been throughout the first 1½ circuits. Had Ascetic's Silver not broken down badly when he had only one more fence to jump and held a lead of fully 150 yards, I believe his rider, Mr. Hastings', emphatic pronunciation that just as he had "never seen" the Frenchman he "never would have seen him," is absolutely correct. But the proverbial slip "between cup and lip" is exactly chasing.

A New Trainer.

W. Morgan, the senior of five brothers, all steeplechase jockeys, although not giving up riding, is beginning as a trainer at the historic establishment, The Warren, Epsom. If I had a "jumper" to train there is not a man I would sooner give it to than Billy Morgan, who has lived among horses all his life—and candidly admits that he would sooner "die" than be without them.

Prophetic.

It will hardly be possible or natural to maintain the good fortune attaching of late to the few selections made under these notes. The law of average suggests the very opposite, while few readers actually recognise the difficulty in inditing selections four full days ahead. Ordinarily it is bad enough and difficult enough to try to pick winners on the *day of the race*. However, it is obvious, on the Lincoln form, that

Arranmore

must gain atonement in the Newbury Spring Cup to-day (Thursday), for he has the beating of most of the possible field on last week's running, as well as advantage in considerable poundage. The Carrholme form also suggests that

Dutch

must take the Thatcham Handicap, for he will relish the more severe course, being such a slow beginner; he should, therefore, be supported each way.

Form of the moment is usually most reliable quite early in the season, and as we saw

Kaffir Chief

figure so prominently in last week's big race—and there was excuse for his very suddenly "snuffing out"—the little horse ought to gain reparation in Friday's Doveridge Handicap at Derby. At Leicester next week those who have lost money already this season upon Bedminster, Buckstead and Summer have an opportunity of its recovery.

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The following claims have been received for the issue of January 23rd and February 20th:—

ARTHUR LAWRENCE, Caswell, Heath Road, Harrow-on-the-Hill. (No. 137646—January 23rd.)

J. C. LINDSELL, 18, Walmsley Street, Hull. (No. 263304—February 20th.)

W. H. BRADY, 20, Symons Street, Fountain Road, Hull. (No. 18149—February 20th.)

J. TYRRELL, 2, Hillside Road, Stamford Hill, N. (No. 221965—February 20th.)

C. SMEDLIN, 12, Camden Avenue, Peckham Road, S.E. (No. 26344—February 20th.)

The following are the fifty numbers for our issue of February 27th:—

2604; 5431; 8466; 16374; 19939; 23469; 25673; 28008; 37467; 52110; 52287; 58163; 60101; 66470; 71052; 74559; 80122; 87688; 87801; 89981; 96601; 104711; 116605; 119243; 140113; 146479; 149552; 158369; 163223; 178670; 186364; 193466; 200313; 210242; 223307; 225638; 235678; 246666; 250114; 257367; 259018; 260165; 264555; 267267; 271004; 272909; 279117; 284511; 287648; 294783.

INITIAL NOUGHTS SHOULD BE DISREGARDED, BUT FINAL ONES ARE, OF COURSE, RECKONED.

THE FIFTY NUMBERS IN RESPECT OF THIS WEEK WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN OUR ISSUE DATED MAY 8TH (PUBLISHED MAY 6TH).

Special Notice.

We find that the arrangements in connection with our New Ballot Scheme will take somewhat longer to complete than we anticipated, and, therefore, until further notice, the scheme will continue on the old lines, as explained above.

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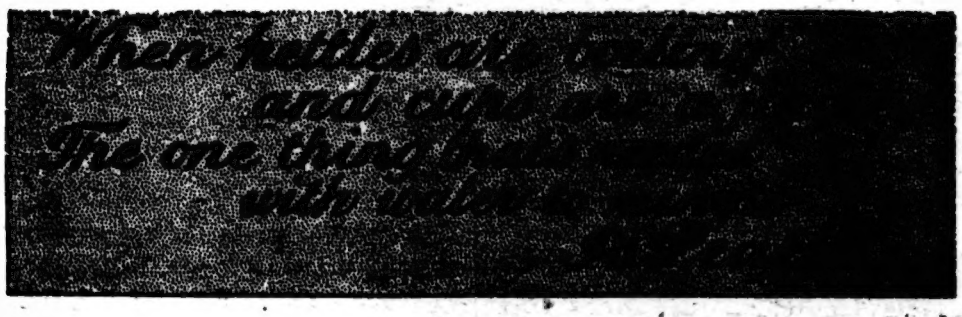

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